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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

MORALE'S ROLE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

by

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September 2015

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MORALE'S ROLE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the factors that help and hinder employee morale at public safety agencies within the homeland security enterprise. The Department of Homeland Security, and the various agencies that support it, have reported low levels of job satisfaction. Through an in-depth analysis of literature that discusses workplace morale in the public sector, this document provides recommendations for agencies interested in improving it. The negative effects of low morale on employees can lead to decreased productivity, burnout, and psychological distress. By defining and measuring employee satisfaction within the agency, and utilizing the employees' public service motivation to inspire performance, leaders can improve morale within their workgroups. By recognizing occupational stress as a collateral result of work within the field of homeland security, and developing programs that address that stress before it becomes overwhelming, leaders within the discipline are able to reduce costs, retain employees and improve efficiencies. Through adjustments in the promotional and mentorship process within the agency, leadership's attentiveness toward morale becomes engrained in the homeland security culture.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CHDS	Center for Homeland Defense and Security
CISD	critical incident stress debriefing
CISM	critical incident stress management
CMB	crisis management briefing
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FEVS	Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey
IMT	incident management team
IOM	Institute of Medicine
MHP	mental health professional
MWR	Morale, Welfare and Recreation
OCB	organizational citizenship behavior
POS	perceived organizational support
PSM	public service motivation
PSS	perceived supervisor support
PTSD	post-traumatic stress disorder

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis examines the factors that help and hinder employee morale at public safety agencies within the homeland security discipline. The thousands of men and women who work for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), or one of the many agencies that support the protection of the United States, have reported low levels of job satisfaction.¹ Leadership at these agencies should be aware of the effects of low morale on their employees and pro-actively develop plans and mentor people to help address it. Through the discussion of top issues affecting workplace morale, this document provides recommendations for agencies interested in improving the mindset of employees.

The results of the Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey (FEVS)² provide some insight into morale at the DHS. However, that department is only one component of the homeland security enterprise. This thesis examines data at all levels to find links between morale and workplace outputs important in the public sector. Through the use of a force field analysis, a deep examination of factors that influence morale, and the degree to which those factors exert that influence, are defined.

Important workplace outputs, such as productivity, effectiveness, safety, turnover and others, all have links to morale in the workplace. Through a meta-analysis of the relevant research, this thesis puts what is known (in 2015) about the factors that affect public safety morale in one place and applies the findings to agencies with homeland security responsibilities.

This thesis begins with a discussion about why morale is important in the public sector. Good morale helps workers accomplish stressful tasks in the face of adversity, which is commonplace in the daily challenge of protecting this

¹ United States Office of Personnel Management Planning and Policy Analysis, *2014 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Results* (Washington, DC: Office of Personnel Management, 2012), 5, <http://www.FedView.opm.gov>.

² Ibid.

nation's homeland. Wicked problems are difficult to solve and a system in which setbacks are commonplace leads to a feeling of dissatisfaction. Good morale can spur energy to tackle these issues, through better patience and willpower.³

With a workforce becoming increasingly more mobile,⁴ and opportunities in the private sector that include higher pay and less stress, government leaders need to be in touch with employees' needs and challenges in an effort to retain staffing and remain resilient against emerging problems. Long hours and untimely emergencies lead to burnout within the homeland security enterprise and the high costs of replacing employees create both budget and efficiency issues.⁵ Making changes to the work environment that leads to burnout has shown to have the best result in minimizing this disenfranchisement.⁶ Improvements in both perceived organizational support (POS) and perceived supervisor support (PSS) also reduced burnout.⁷ Employees who establish a belief that their department values their well-being and respects what they offer the organization are less likely to suffer from burnout and will stay with their employer longer.⁸

While public sector employment offers its unique set of challenges, employers can also utilize a few traits that occur primarily within those employed in public service. Public service motivation (PSM) is the attraction some employees feel towards work that helps or benefits this country. Inspired by patriotism and altruistic in nature, public sector workers have shown to have

³ B. W. Gocke, "Morale in a Police Department," *J. Crim. L. & Criminology* 36 (1945): 215.

⁴ Robert G. DelCampo et al., *Managing the Multi-generational Workforce: From the GI Generation to the Millennials* (Farnham, Surrey, United Kingdom: Gower Publishing, Ltd., 2012).

⁵ Christina Maslach, *Burnout: The Cost of Caring* (Los Altos, CA: ISHK, 2003).

⁶ John R. Freedy and Stevan E. Hobfoll, "Stress Inoculation for Reduction of Burnout: A Conservation of Resources Approach," *Anxiety, Stress and Coping* 6, no. 4 (1994): 311–325.

⁷ Carl P. Maertz and Rodger W. Griffeth, "Eight Motivational Forces and Voluntary Turnover: A Theoretical Synthesis with Implications for Research," *Journal of Management* 30, no. 5 (2004): 667–683.

⁸ Linda Rhoades, Robert Eisenberger, and Stephen Armeli, "Affective Commitment to the Organization: The Contribution of Perceived Organizational Support," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 86, no. 5 (2001): 825.

higher levels of PSM,⁹ and the employer can use it to keep them focused and motivated on the goals of the organization. While not every person who seeks work in the homeland security enterprise does so for the same reason, each will have different levels of PSM. The leaders these individuals work for should have a good understanding of their motivations and adjust their management styles accordingly. These adjustments will assist in improving the employees' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB),¹⁰ or the dedication they feel to the agency.

The management of morale within the homeland security enterprise is challenged by the level of stress placed upon employees at all levels. Responder stress is greatly affected by the imbalance between what is required to be done, what is expected to be done, the manner in which the work is judged, and the incapability to carry out what is expected realistically.¹¹ The lack of control some responders feel when executing the mission only exaggerates feelings of stress and lowers morale.¹² The homeland security leader who seeks out opportunities to give workgroups autonomy in decision making is taking steps to lower stress levels and improving PSS. In a well-run public sector organization, a system that helps address stress in the workplace is embedded in the culture. Peer support or critical incident stress management programs also help address both organizational and operational stress before it becomes damaging.¹³

⁹ James L. Perry and Annie Hondeghem, ed., *Motivation in Public Management: The Call of Public Service: The Call of Public Service* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹⁰ Dennis W. Organ, "Organizational Citizenship Behavior: It's Construct Clean-Up Time," *Human Performance* 10, no. 2 (June 1997): 85.

¹¹ Bernie L. Patterson, "Job Experience and Perceived Job Stress Among Police, Correctional, and Probation/Parole Officers," *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 19, no. 3 (1992): 260–285.

¹² Francis L. McCafferty, Erin McCafferty, and Margaret A. McCafferty, "Stress and Suicide in Police Officers: Paradigm of Occupational Stress," *Southern Medical Journal* 85, no. 3 (1992): 233–243.

¹³ Mark Chapin et al., "Training Police Leadership to Recognize and Address Operational Stress," *Police Quarterly* 11, no. 3 (2008): 338–352.

This thesis concludes with key concepts to assist homeland security leaders improve the morale at their agencies. Through better engagement with employees, these leaders have opportunities to improve satisfaction, reduce turnover, and increase the efficiency of the organization. These agencies need to define and embrace morale, and consistently look for ways to improve it, as long as those programs do not adversely interfere with daily operations. Once defined, the agency needs to create a measurement tool that tracks employee satisfaction and can compare it to other metrics in the workplace. It is more easily done if the agency creates an engaging communication strategy; one shared across multiple mediums and various formats. The communication will help better define what motivates the workgroup and identify stressors before becoming damaging. For those times during which stress becomes overwhelming, morale wellness and peer support programs can assist with providing psychological first aid. Finally, to assist in changing the culture of an organization to one more emotionally intelligent, senior leaders need to create mentorship programs that develop employees who recognize morale management as a necessary skill for tomorrow's leaders.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND AND NEED

The thousands of men and women who work for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), or one of the many agencies that supports the protection of the United States, have reported low levels of job satisfaction.¹ Oversight committees, special programs, department-wide surveys, investigations, and other inquiries have been made to uncover the reasons behind the dissatisfaction in the work place, in an effort to improve it. Many of those efforts have been flawed and are in need of a remodel.

Leadership in the homeland security field may want to be concerned with the effects of low morale reported in surveys, but a limited amount of supporting documentation is available to indicate why they should have that concern. The relationship between morale and workplace outputs within the public sector has not been clearly defined in previous research. While complaints about morale might be common, documentation providing the impact of poor morale is less common. This thesis discusses the top issues affecting workplace morale in the public sector and offer suggestions on ways to improve those issues. A thesis that examines the relationship between the satisfaction of employees within the public sector and the problems (or lack of problems) associated with it is needed. It is designed to be used by homeland security leaders as a tool to check their agency for both positive and negative influences on morale.

The results of the Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey (FEVS)² provide some insight into morale, job satisfaction, and engagement levels within the DHS. However, they are only one component of the homeland security enterprise. Numerous support agencies at the national, state and local level do

¹ United States Office of Personnel Management Planning and Policy Analysis, *2014 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Results* (Washington, DC: Office of Personnel Management, 2012), 5, <http://www.FedView.opm.gov>.

² Ibid.

not conduct annual morale measurement inquiries. The reasons these surveys are not conducted may be due to a lack of evidence to support a need to monitor satisfaction levels, the costs of surveys, inability to process or understand the data, etc. Therefore, much less is known regarding the morale levels at these agencies, and how they compare to their federal counterparts. Data highlighting the correlation between morale and outputs at agencies with homeland security functions are available but must be pieced together from various sources. A comparative analysis of the morale studies researching public safety agencies would help identify what is known and not known about the factors that affect morale within them.

B. HOMELAND SECURITY ENTERPRISE

The passage of the Homeland Security Act in 2002 formally created the DHS. It was designed to coordinate and unify the United States' security efforts and incorporated 22 different federal departments and agencies into a unified cabinet agency.³ Despite covering a wide variety of functions that support the protection of the United States, many other public sector agencies and departments at the state and local level still support the mission of the DHS.

The multi-faceted mission of preventing terrorism, enhancing security, securing this nation's borders, enforcing immigration laws, safeguarding cyberspace, and ensuring resilience to disasters requires a unified response that is larger than the DHS. Additional agencies that provide support—such as the more geographically located police, fire and health departments—are not included in the 22 agencies, and more than 240,000 employees work within the DHS.⁴ The homeland security enterprise referred to in this thesis includes all these agencies and their personnel. The combined effort of federal, state and local agencies is utilized to safeguard the nation. Their response to threats to this

³ "Creation of the Department of Homeland Security," accessed February 2, 2015, <http://www.dhs.gov/creation-department-homeland-security>.

⁴ "About DHS," accessed February 2, 2015, <http://www.dhs.gov/about-dhs>.

nation's citizens impacts personnel in a unique way that is worthy of discussion. Therefore, this thesis discusses morale not only at the DHS, but also at the agencies that support its mission.

C. SIGNIFICANCE TO THE FIELD

Leaders within homeland security are frequently faced with quandaries on how to best manage their agency. The concept of homeland security is relatively new and the discipline is evolving as people learn what works and what does not work in the protection of the United States. As those changes are considered, good leaders contemplate how the adjustments will affect the entire workgroup. After those modifications are made, management must work to help the transition go smoothly and without setbacks.

Manipulation of the workplace impacts the workers within it. Therefore, when global changes are made, leaders should attempt to forecast how those adjustments will impact employee morale. If data suggests that a change in policy or practice will benefit the agency, those changes are likely to be made. In the reverse, if data suggests that the change will negatively impact a metric, such as performance or efficiency, leaders should avoid those adjustments. Research that helps determine the value of employee morale could allow a leader to decide how important morale improvement would be to the overall health of the organization. Conducting graduate-level research on morale will help determine if the value some leaders place on it can be supported scholastically, as opposed to instinctually or emotionally.

Thorough research on this topic could provide some insight into the way the homeland security agencies manage their personnel. If morale is shown to have a direct positive correlation on outcomes, such as productivity and employee engagement, then it would be in the best interest of leaders within homeland security agencies to create programs that help improve morale. If morale is shown to have little effect on these factors, then money can be routed

away from these programs and into other agendas that better support the function of the agency.

D. RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the factors helping and hindering employee morale in public safety agencies within the homeland security discipline?

E. RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis is a study of morale within the homeland security enterprise and its relationship with outputs, such as productivity, effectiveness, safety, turnover, and others. It is a meta-analysis that examines the relevant data within the public sector, collected during a search of research literature dealing with morale, and identifying what is known and not known about the topic. It also examines some of the studies on morale done on businesses in the private sector. The purpose of the review is to determine how those results may relate to a homeland security agency.

Morale was selected as the object of this thesis because of the volumes of discussions that occur about it, especially when considering the FEVS. Unfortunately, those discussions frequently end with anecdotes and not with action plans to improve morale. This research was done on two levels. The first-level review is an identification, from the literature, of the factors that affect morale. The second level, which includes an analysis of the data, is a deeper review of those factors. This deeper review focuses more specifically on the factors unique to the homeland security enterprise. By reviewing studies and experiments that compare morale in the workplace with outputs, such as productivity, attendance and others, it is possible to reach a conclusion as to whether high morale agencies are more effective than low morale agencies. Furthermore, a review of the literature provides educated homeland security leaders with suggestions on how they might influence morale levels at their agencies.

A limitation discovered during this research is the vast differences between agencies that support homeland security within the United States. Size differences, management differences, as well as the general duties of the agency, mean that morale issues develop differently, and thus, need to be addressed differently by management. This thesis provides insight into numerous factors that influence morale, both positively and negatively, but it is the homeland security administrators who will need to determine which factor has the most influence at their agencies.

F. DATA SOURCES

This thesis utilizes various data sources in the research. It is an in-depth analysis of the academic and practitioner literature about what is known and unknown within public safety agencies. The analysis includes a review of surveys (such as the FEVS), interviews, case studies, observations, or any other published data of scholastic quality.

G. TYPE AND MODE OF ANALYSIS

This thesis utilizes a force-field analysis of current research on morale within public safety/homeland security. That analysis focuses on what elements within the homeland security enterprise help support improved morale and what forces work against improved morale. This thesis contrasts and combines results from various studies with the goal of identifying patterns in their results. The analysis, at times, also identifies a lack of a pattern, but the relationship being investigated is between morale and work outputs.

H. OUTPUT

The output for this thesis combines all issues that have been discovered (in 2015) about the factors that affect public safety morale in one place and applies the findings to agencies with homeland security responsibilities. The document is something that can be used by leaders to determine the importance of morale at their agencies and whether they want

to invest time or money into improving it. Furthermore, it offers suggestions on what can be done to implement processes at agencies that address practices that negatively affect morale.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review makes a preliminary identification of the factors that affect morale within the public sector. These factors are analyzed in later sections of this thesis. This thesis takes a two-pronged approach to looking at the issue of morale in the public sector. The first step, identifying the factors that affect morale, is accomplished by reviewing, at a general level, the research literature on morale so that factors can be identified. The second step, an analysis of primary data sources, delves deeper into the factors that affect morale with the intention of trying to understand what can be done to amplify the factors that assist morale and damper the factors that inhibit morale. The literature review begins by discussing how morale is defined and the various terms synonymous to morale. The second section discusses the history and evolution of morale studies. The third section discusses the challenges of measuring morale within homeland security agencies. The military's morale model is discussed in section four. Section five discusses morale's relationship with perceived organizational support.

A. UNDERSTANDING MORALE

Within this thesis, several terms are used that are interconnected with morale, such as job satisfaction, workplace happiness, perceived organizational support, esprit de corps, organizational citizenship, motivation, and others. Each of these titles are subsets of morale or are directly related in some way to the concept of workplace morale. For the purpose of this thesis, which has a goal of defining how these factors influence the mindset of human capital, all these terms fall under the "umbrella" of morale and are being studied in an effort to understand the issue holistically better.

Various definitions of morale are available in the literature. Morale, and its effect on the workplace, has been studied by scholars in the private sector for decades. Known by many names, morale and its relationship with workplace

outputs is worthy of the attention it has received. Various definitions can be found, but a common element is its reliance on the feelings, emotions, and attitudes of the workgroup.⁵ Since the creation of the DHS, morale levels have been a concern to the congressional oversight committees that regulate them.⁶

The Business Dictionary describes employee morale as the “emotions, attitude, satisfaction, and [the] overall outlook of employees during their time in a workplace environment.”⁷ Black's Law Dictionary states it is “a measure seeking positive, confident, satisfied employees [involving] the overall viewpoint of the employees while at work in the work environment. [It] includes employee emotions, attitude and satisfaction.”⁸ According to the Black's Law Dictionary, the way employees' feel has a direct relationship with their productivity. “Dissatisfied and negative employees portray negative, low-employee morale about their work environment. Positive or highly confident employees that are happy and positive at work are said to have high morale.”⁹ Random House dictionary states it is an “emotional or mental condition with respect to cheerfulness, confidence, zeal, etc., especially in the face of opposition, hardship.”¹⁰

Morale is consistently defined from the viewpoint of the workers. It is their opinion, tied to their emotions and feelings, not that of the administrators, although managers and administrators are also affected by morale. At times, supervisors may believe that morale is high, but a check of the workgroup tells a different story. For example, the Government Accountability Office indicates that

⁵ “Employee Morale Definition,” accessed October 15, 2013, <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/employee-morale.html#ixzz2iHuYpgD3>.

⁶ *Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations and Management, Building One DHS: Why is Employee Morale Low? Hearing before the Committee of Homeland Security, 112th Cong., 2 (2012), 3.*

⁷ “Employee Morale Definition.”

⁸ “Employee Morale,” accessed October 15, 2013, <http://thelawdictionary.org/employee-morale/>.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ “Morale,” accessed October 20, 2013, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/morale>.

supervisors at the DHS are more satisfied than non-management employees.¹¹ This finding matches other studies that show that the higher employees' rank, the higher their morale.¹² Furthermore, those employees stationed at headquarters showed higher satisfaction ratings than those in the field.¹³ The difference in reported satisfaction levels can cause problems when management is assessing their department's morale from their (the manager's) perspective. It would be naive for leaders to postulate on the level of morale at an agency based on their opinion alone. This type of disconnect means that communication systems are broken and are in need of repair.

B. MOTIVATION/MORALE HISTORY

Many studies, beginning with the Hawthorne Electric Company experiment, elaborate on the links between employee morale, motivation, and productivity. This landmark experiment was conducted in the 1920s and 1930s at the Hawthorne, Illinois Western Electric factory. Workers were divided into groups, with one of the groups asked to work in varying conditions, including the reduction of lighting. During the experiments, researchers, led in part by Elton Mayo, would ask the groups for their feedback and input on the activities and that feedback was used to alter future experiments. Work hours, the amount and lengths of their breaks, lighting conditions, amongst other things, were changed based on feedback and discussions with the workers.¹⁴ The results were improved productivity and low levels of absenteeism.¹⁵ The research showed that changes in the environment did not influence the change in productivity, but

¹¹ United States Government Accountability Office, *Taking Further Action to Better Determine Causes of Morale Problems Would Assist in Targeting Action Plans* (GAO-12-940) (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2012), 41.

¹² Jerome Kahan, "“One DHS” Revisited: Can the Next Homeland Security Secretary Unite the Department?," *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* 11, no. 1 (2013): 1–24.

¹³ United States Government Accountability Office, *Taking Further Action to Better Determine Causes of Morale Problems Would Assist in Targeting Action Plans*, 41.

¹⁴ Elton Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (New York: McMillan, 1933).

¹⁵ Fritz J. Roethlisberger and William Dickson, *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939).

the concern the researchers had for the workers and the acceptance of the feedback provided.¹⁶ Workers altered their behavior because of an external influence. This concern is similar to the concern that some supervisors have for their subordinates.

One of the surprises of the research was later described as the “Hawthorne Effect,” a situation in which test subjects modify or improve their actions solely because they are being observed.¹⁷ Mayo argues that the attention given to the employees largely contributed to the increase in productivity. By making the workers feel more important, giving them opportunities to share their opinions, and showing concern about their workplace, the employees responded with increases in output. Hawthorne was one of the first experiments that placed individuals in the workplace in a social context, and showed that their performance is influenced not only by their abilities, but by the surroundings and influences around them. Mayo explained that the increase in productivity in the experiment group was due to a positive emotional effect, one directly related to the “sympathetic” observer. He described the research associated with Hawthorne as management effect, one in which management can make workers perform better because they feel better about that engagement. Within the context of the Hawthorne experiment, workers in the experimental group were given opportunities to make decisions about their environment, which thus gave them more control as a group. This autonomy kept the workers engaged.¹⁸ A supervisor’s engagement with the workgroup is still important today.

¹⁶ Elton Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1945), 64.

¹⁷ Henry A. Landsberger, *Hawthorne Revisited: Management and the Worker, Its Critics, and Developments in Human Relations in Industry*, Cornell Studies in Industrial and Labor Relations vol. IX (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University 1958), 46.

¹⁸ Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, 147.

C. HOMELAND SECURITY CHALLENGES

While productivity can be measured more easily when studying a business that manufactures a product (such as the Hawthorne Electric Company), agencies and departments with homeland security responsibilities commonly perform functions not as measurable, or their outcomes are more difficult to quantify. It is an additional challenge when a supervisor tries to correlate a relationship between morale and productivity. For example, a police agency may have an increase in morale, but other factors may contribute to a rise in the crime rate or a decrease in community satisfaction; key metrics used to measure the success of police programs. In these examples, improved morale may have other positive effects in the workplace without either showing positive changes in criminal activity or improvement in public support. Administrators would want to identify and communicate those changes to reinforce their benefits of improved morale. The use of communication and transparency are key tools used by administrators to keep morale from dipping.

Alexander H. Leighton, a social scientist and anthropologist, stated that “morale is the capacity of a group of people to pull together persistently and consistently in pursuit of a common purpose.”¹⁹ Leighton was recognized for his unique perspective on personality under conditions of stress,²⁰ as might be found in an agency associated with homeland security. In the reverse, an agency taking steps to reach an established goal and enhancing cohesiveness to reach it, may be improving the morale of its workers. Cohesiveness would be especially noticeable when responding to large Katrina-sized incidents during which a unified response is not only important, but subject to more scrutiny by the public. Homeland security personnel sent to these large-scale events show an ability to have a cohesive response (despite poor morale scores) during the onset, but as

¹⁹ Alexander H. Leighton, *Human Relations in a Changing World: Observations on the Uses of the Social Sciences* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1949).

²⁰ Thomas Weaver, “Alexander H. Leighton: Interdisciplinary Research and Personality Theory,” in *The Dynamics of Applied Anthropology in the Twentieth Century: The Malinowski Award Papers* (Oklahoma City, OK: Society for Applied Anthropology, 2002), ch. 14, 200.

the incident moves into later operational periods, the stress of the situation manifests itself in a variety of ways and may need to be addressed by management before job satisfaction levels drop. The availability of psychological first aid, as a form of organizational support, prolongs the work life of the employee and takes the mental health of the responder into account.²¹ This support creates a workforce that can concentrate on future events.

Performance while working in the private sector is different than performance while working for a public sector agency, such as the DHS. One clear difference between these organizations is the demand. Many jobs in the private sector can function within set schedules that allow for adequate rest and break periods. Feeling rested, or recovered, is a predictor of daily job performance, satisfaction, and the effort of employees.²² That predictor does not hold true for the homeland security discipline. The employees within homeland security frequently work very long hours, in stressful conditions, only to return to the job the next day (often without adequate rest) and start again. This stress wears on employees and begins to affect their organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), or their discretionary behavior above and beyond the normal job task assignments.²³ It relates to personal choice at work, such as the choices associated with morale. Without recovery, job performance and morale suffers. A main trait of OCB is helping others within the workplace and preserving interpersonal harmony.²⁴ Therefore, a decrease in OCB equates to a decrease in harmony within the workgroup, which can affect its morale.

²¹ David M. Benedek, Carol Fullerton, and Robert J. Ursano, "First Responders: Mental Health Consequences of Natural and Human-Made Disasters for Public Health and Public Safety Workers*," *Annu. Rev. Public Health* 28 (2007): 63.

²² Carmen Binnewies, Sabine Sonnentag, and Eva J. Mojza, "Daily Performance at Work: Feeling Recovered in the Morning as a Predictor of Day-level Job Performance," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 30, no. 1 (2009): 67–93.

²³ Dennis W. Organ, "Organizational Citizenship Behavior: It's Construct Clean-Up Time," *Human Performance* 10, no. 2 (June 1997): 85.

²⁴ Linn Van Dyne and Jeffrey A. LePine, "Helping and Voice Extra-role Behaviors: Evidence of Construct and Predictive Validity," *Academy of Management Journal* 41, no. 1 (1998): 108–119.

D. MORALE IN THE MILITARY

Morale and OCB has been studied by the military for decades. The cohesiveness of a workgroup is nowhere more important than in the armed forces that protect this country. Higher levels of morale and cohesion have been linked to lower post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms and less psychological distress in troops returning from deployment.²⁵ Before the term “homeland security” existed, the military performed many of the duties associated with the protection of this nation from threats, and they still do. It has a long recognized tradition of maintaining the morale of its troops, which dates back to the revolutionary war.²⁶

The creation of the Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) program in July 1940²⁷ reflects a department-wide commitment to (among other things): building healthy families and communities, encouraging positive individual values, improving recruitment and retention, providing the physical, cultural and social needs of personnel, as well as programs that will improve the quality of life for soldiers and their families.²⁸

In addition to MWR programs as an effort to build morale, the military also recognizes that duties associated with combat and combat preparation can cause stress levels to rise. Unmitigated stress can damage the cohesiveness of the team. During the deployment of military units (both in war and peace time), it is common to have stress control units deployed with them. These teams are a natural part of each unit and are supported by additional combat stress control teams when it is necessary to address engagement stress with the military

²⁵ Allison A. Whitesell and Gina P. Owens, “The Impact of Patriotism, Morale, and Unit Cohesion on Mental Health in Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan,” *Traumatology* 18, no. 1 (2012): 1.

²⁶ Joanne Marshall-Mies, David Westhuis, and Richard Fafara, U.S. *Army Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Programmes: Links to Readiness and Retention* (Arnold, MD: Swan Research, Inc., 2011), 2.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Under Secretary of Defense (AT&L), *Military Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Programs* (DOD Number 1015.10) (Washington, DC: Under Secretary of Defense (AT&L), 2009).

personnel. They have found these teams useful to address stress levels proactively, to keep the units mentally healthy, and to build morale within the unit. The organization and training for these special units is outlined in their field manuals.²⁹ All these commitments help improve the morale of military personnel. Many local police and fire departments have similar stress and peer support units.

The military perceives morale as an attitude towards duty.³⁰ MWR programs along with stress control teams work at improving that attitude. The military embodies the concept of esprit de corps, a common synonym to morale. Studies show that MWR programs have a positive effect on soldier's emotional attachment and the perceptions by soldiers and their families that the military cares about them.³¹ They also feel that stress control units give soldiers enough respite that their satisfaction and mindset do not suffer.

E. PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Another way to discuss morale is through the concept of perceived organizational support (POS). POS refers to the degree in which employees' believe that their contributions are valued and their personal well-being is being considered during decision making.³² The result of POS are higher levels of employee involvement with work projects and higher levels of enthusiasm for day-to-day tasks.³³ Employees are more involved in their work when clear expectations have been given to them, they are provided with the tools and

²⁹ United States Army, *Field Manual 8-51, Combat Stress Control in a Theater of Operations Tactic, Techniques, and Procedures* (Washington, DC: United States Army, 1998), <http://www.enlistment.us/field-manuals/fm-8-51-combat-stress-control-in-a-theater-of-operations.shtml>.

³⁰ James Ulio, "Military Morale," *American Journal of Sociology* 47, no. 3 (November 1941): 321–330.

³¹ Marshall-Mies, Westhuis, and Fafara, *U.S. Army Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Programmes: Links to Readiness and Retention*, 2.

³² Robert Eisenberger, Robin Huntington, Steven Hutchinson, and Debora Sowa, "Perceived Organizational Support," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 71, no. 3 (1986): 501.

³³ James K. Harter, Frank L. Schmidt, and Theodore L. Hayes, "Business-unit-level Relationship between Employee Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, and Business Outcomes: A Meta-analysis," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87, no. 2 (2002): 269.

equipment needed to carry out the job function, are aware of how their work impacts their community, engage in efforts that are impactful, and are able to utilize mistakes as learning opportunities for future development.³⁴

In an effort to improve morale, many private sector businesses are investing significant resources into POS programs. Google and Qualcomm are a few examples of companies that have employee support programs that historically would have been considered very unusual, such as massage programs or childcare services.³⁵ As a result of their successes, they have become more and more common. In 2009, Robert Riggles et al. completed a meta-analysis of the effects of POS on four employee outcome variables: commitment to the organization, satisfaction with the job, task performance, and desire to leave their position for another job outside the organization.³⁶ That analysis was based on 20 years of scholastic research.³⁷ The research showed a strong positive relationship between POS and both organizational commitment and job satisfaction, weaker positive relationships between POS and performance and a negative relationship between POS and the intention to leave. Interestingly, the research showed that all variables showed stronger correlation in non-front line employees as compared to front line employees.³⁸

Does that correlation between perceived organizational support and productivity justify the time, energy, and money spent by private sector businesses and public agencies on support programs? The research suggests that the increase in the attitudinal and behavioral employee outcomes justify the

³⁴ Upasana Aggarwal, Sumita Datta, and Shivganesh Bhargava. "The relationship between Human Resource Practices: psychological contract and employee engagement implications for managing talent." *IIMB Management Review* 19, no. 3 (2007): 317.

³⁵ Robert Levering and Milton Moskowitz, "How We Pick the 100 Best," http://money.cnn.com/element/ssi/sections/mag/fortune/bestcompanies/2008/box_how.popup.html.

³⁶ Robert J. Riggles, Diane R. Edmondson, and John D. Hansen, "A Meta-analysis of the Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Job Outcomes: 20 Years of Research," *Journal of Business Research* 62, no. 10 (2009): 1027–1030.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

effort. Employers that provide this POS are “more apt to have employees who are not only more satisfied with their jobs, but also more committed to the organization.”³⁹ In the homeland security sector, where employees commonly leave their jobs for similar but higher paying jobs in the private sector,⁴⁰ the level of commitment an employee has for the agency could keep employees from moving on. They have higher levels of morale and are significantly less likely to leave, per Riggle et al.'s analysis.

Speaking further on the relationship between aforementioned job type and organizational outcomes, the effects of POS were not as obvious for those employees working lower levels in the organization, in nearly all categories.⁴¹ This result would indicate that job roles play a significant part in the amount of organizational support perceived by employees. If they are further away from the center of the organization, they may feel more disconnected. Agencies may derive some benefit from investigating ways to keep line-level employees from feeling this disconnect. It may be especially important in the homeland security field where nearly every agency, department, and workgroup serves different functions, with many of their offices a long distance from headquarters.

F. CONCLUSION

This preliminary review of morale within the public sector has uncovered several areas that need further exploration. Morale within the public sector is defined in various ways and understanding what it is requires the agency to define it. Scholars have looked at morale from various different perspectives and paradigms, but individual agencies looking to improve it should make sure they have a transparent definition agreed upon by the workgroup.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Dana Priest and William M. Arkin, “Top Secret America,” *Washington Post*, July 19, 2010, 182.

⁴¹ Robert J. Riggle, et al., “A Meta-analysis of the Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Job Outcomes: 20 Years of Research,” 1027–1030.

The perils of morale within the public sector have been well-publicized. The last few years have provided examples of the morale challenges associated with the DHS and the agencies that support it. Government shutdowns and looming debt ceilings caused morale to weaken. According to the *Washington Post*, 82% of those surveyed believed the shutdown significantly damaged morale.⁴² Leaders within the public sector must identify unique factors within the public sector that help counteract depleting morale. Within the data chapter, this thesis uncovers traits within public sector workers that can be tapped to help reduce the negative effects of the job.

The Washington, DC Naval shipyard shooting tested the resolve of emergency responders in the Capital region and again reminded public safety workers that threats against the United States are possible on this nation's soil. The media ran reports detailing poor coordination in the emergency response.⁴³ The frustration of tactical unit members and the lack of organizational support in such instances cause morale problems within agencies, divide workgroups, and can lead to post-traumatic stress issues. This situation substantially reduces the functionality of the groups as an interconnected response force. The data section identifies systems agencies can incorporate within the public sector that help employees deal with these stressors and stay more interconnected.

The Paris Charlie Hebdo attack reminded Americans that coordinated terrorist attacks, similar to the Boston Marathon bombing, continue to happen in modern nations, and agencies that defend them must be prepared to respond.⁴⁴ Thus, any issue within the agency that might lower its efficiency must be addressed.

⁴² Joe Davidson, "The Shutdown Is Over but Federal Employee Morale Still Suffers," *Washington Post*, October 22, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federal_government/the-shutdown-is-over-but-federal-employee-morale-still-suffers/2013/10/21/b5ec651c-3a80-11e3-a94f-b58017bfee6c_story.html.

⁴³ Dick Uliano, "U.S. Capital Police Launch a Review of its Navy Yard Shooting Response," *USA Today*, September 18, 2013, <http://www.wtop.com/41/3456761/US-Capitol-Police-launch-review-of-its-Navy-Yard-shooting-response>.

⁴⁴ "Charlie Hebdo Attack: Three Days of Terror," January 14, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30708237>.

This literature review has identified several issues related to morale that are re-visited in the data section in an effort to help address those efficiency issues and include the following.

- morale and its importance
- public sector morale challenges
- stress-related morale issues
- motivating public sector employees
- peer support programs

Both proactive and reactive measures to improve morale should be undertaken to influence organizational culture positively, increase productivity and employee engagement, and reduce turnover. This thesis is an effort to examine morale and explain its place within public sector agencies that have homeland security responsibilities. The next section discusses morale factors more extensively.

III. DATA

A. WHAT IS MORALE?

Morale is a term used to describe the feeling people have in the workplace, usually about the workplace itself. It is a state of mind with a reference to courage, zeal, confidence, and synonymous qualities.⁴⁵ It is a condition of mind and spirit. It allows for staying power in the face of other challenges. When broken, the job suffers. With all the challenges faced in the public sector, especially at agencies with homeland security responsibilities, keeping the morale of the workplace positive can improve the safety of the employees within operations.

Job satisfaction is defined by Locke as the “pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experience.”⁴⁶ It is a measure of the interaction between workers and their work environment, but that measure is not necessarily a true measure of the interaction but rather the perception the worker has about that interaction. Taylor and Westover describe this measure as a needs-satisfaction model.⁴⁷ In other words, the satisfaction of employees is directly related to how well the employer fulfils their needs.⁴⁸

These definitions have some similarities. First, they describe morale as a combined result; an overall outlook. Most studies reviewed in this thesis look at the morale of the group, while some take a more individualistic viewpoint. Second, morale is an outcome after some type of interaction has occurred at

⁴⁵ B. W. Gocke, “Morale in a Police Department,” *J. Crim. L. & Criminology* 36 (1945): 215.

⁴⁶ Edwin A. Locke, “The Nature and Causes of Job Satisfaction1,” in *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, ed. Marvin D. Dunnette (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976), 1297–134.

⁴⁷ Jeannette Taylor and Jonathan H. Westover, “Job Satisfaction in the Public Service: The Effects of Public Service Motivation, Workplace Attributes and Work Relations,” *Public Management Review* 13, no. 5 (2011): 731–751.

⁴⁸ Amy L. Kristof-Brown, Ryan D. Zimmerman, and Erin C. Johnson, “Consequences of Individuals’ Fit at Work: A Meta-Analysis of Person–Job, Person–Organization, Person–Group, and Person–Supervisor Fit,” *Personnel Psychology* 58, no. 2 (2005): 281–342.

work, which results in a feeling. Morale measured at the moment someone is hired would not be based on much interaction within the workplace, and does not have much relevance if making adjustments because of it. Third, morale is a measurement of the employees' emotions. It is subjective to the employee or group feeling it; their level of satisfaction, confidence, outlook, and mental condition. If something within the workplace is making employees feel dissatisfied, then morale levels may be affected. Since it is perceived, even when a leader's actions are authentic, and in the best interest of the employee, the workgroup may be negatively affected if it does not believe decisions are made with its wellbeing in mind. This situation exemplifies why open communication models are so important, ones where the reasons behind decisions are openly discussed.

Morale coincides with the effort an agency makes to create a positive work environment, one filled with confident employees who feel trusted, are given opportunities to work autonomously and are satisfied with their jobs. Additional external factors, such as pay, hours, work conditions, benefits, and respect also have an effect on morale.

Said another way, morale is the ability of groups to maintain their focus and belief in the face of opposition, hardship, and negativity.⁴⁹ In the eyes of some supervisors, it is a reflection of willpower and the self-discipline of subordinates.⁵⁰ In the eyes of the subordinates, it is the support supervisors give them to do the job.⁵¹ Robert Guion defines morale as the degree to which

⁴⁹ Leighton, *Human Relations in a Changing World: Observations on the Uses of the Social Sciences*.

⁵⁰ Irvin Child, "Morale: A Bibliographical Review," *Psychological Bulletin* 38, no. 6 (1941): 393–420.

⁵¹ Maria Tims, Arnold B. Bakker, and Despoina Xanthopoulou, "Do Transformational Leaders Enhance Their Followers' Daily Work Engagement?," *The Leadership Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (2011): 122.

individuals perceive they are getting satisfaction from their job.⁵² Egon Guba relates morale to the workgroup and satisfaction to the individual.⁵³

This thesis indicates how morale should be defined by the agency so employees understand what it is, and what the agency is doing to improve it.

B. WHY SATISFACTION/MORALE IS IMPORTANT

Good morale is vital for work within the homeland security discipline. Exposure to life-threatening high-profile events with grotesque and difficult scenes to forget are recognized as obvious sources of stress. However, it is being discovered that public safety stressors are also associated with bureaucratic, administrative, and political influences. Additionally, conflicts within the work-life balance are causing great stress for first responders.⁵⁴ The accumulation of various factors causing stress can have a more significant effect on personnel due to their constant presence. Morale and resilience get eroded daily, as opposed to the potential damage done by low-frequency, high-intensity traumatic exposures. Brown and Campbell cite monotonous day-to-day police tasks, work overload, a lack of communication, poor support from upper administration, and organizational procedures as major sources of stress that add to the stress already endured by police officers.⁵⁵

Good morale helps workers accomplish stressful tasks in the face of adversity. Wicked problems are difficult to solve and a system experiencing consistent failure leads to a feeling of dissatisfaction. Good morale can spur energy to tackle these issues, through better patience and willpower.⁵⁶

⁵² Robert M. Guion, "Some Definitions of Morale," *Personal Psychology* 11 (1958): 59–61.

⁵³ Egon G. Guba, "Morale and Satisfaction: A Study in Past-Future Time Perspective," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 3, no. 2 (1958): 196.

⁵⁴ Mark Chapin et al., "Training Police Leadership to Recognize and Address Operational Stress," *Police Quarterly* 11, no. 3 (2008): 338–352.

⁵⁵ Jennifer M. Brown and Elizabeth A. Campbell, *Stress and Policing: Sources and Strategies* (Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley, 1994), 221.

⁵⁶ Gocke, "Morale in a Police Department," 215.

Workers with higher levels of job satisfaction are more productive,⁵⁷ their work is better quality,⁵⁸ they improve their work group's competitiveness, and they develop successful programs within their agency.⁵⁹ To the contrary, unsatisfied workers are more likely to be late for work, miss deadlines, call in sick, use all their accrued time off, are less likely to be dedicated to the agency, less likely to recruit others, and more likely to leave for other employment.⁶⁰

Statistics indicate that this nation's workforce is becoming increasingly more mobile, it is getting older, and a younger generation (that may have a preference for private sector jobs over public sector ones⁶¹) is entering the job market.⁶² Therefore, it would indicate that government employers need to be aware of what satisfies their employees and keeps their morale levels high. By being in touch with what employees need to stay with an organization, government employers can minimize the amount of time and energy they put into hiring and recruitment campaigns.

C. PUBLIC SECTOR VS. PRIVATE SECTOR

The public and private sectors have key differences, and each has its own unique set of challenges when it comes to worker morale and productivity. People who work within the homeland security discipline commonly have

⁵⁷ Steven H. Appelbaum and Rammie Kamal, "An Analysis of the Utilization and Effectiveness of Non-financial Incentives in Small Business," *Journal of Management Development* 19, no. 9 (2000): 733–763.

⁵⁸ Mark A. Tietjen and Robert M. Myers, "Motivation and Job Satisfaction," *Management Decision* 36, no. 4 (1998): 226–231.

⁵⁹ María José, Garrido, Pilar Pérez, and Carmen Antón, "Determinants of Sales Manager Job Satisfaction. An Analysis of Spanish Industrial Firms," *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 16, no. 10 (2005): 1934–1954.

⁶⁰ Kibeom Lee, Julie J. Carswell, and Natalie J. Allen, "A Meta-analytic Review of Occupational Commitment: Relations with Person-and work-related Variables," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 85, no. 5 (2000): 799.

⁶¹ Sean T. Lyons et al., "Comparing Apples to Apples: A Qualitative Investigation of Career Mobility Patterns across Four Generations," *Career Development International* 17, no. 4 (2012): 333–357.

⁶² Robert G. DelCampo et al., *Managing the Multi-generational Workforce: From the GI Generation to the Millennials* (Farnham, Surrey, United Kingdom: Gower Publishing, Ltd., 2012).

different motivations and are looking for different values and goals while at work. Thus, homeland security leadership must have a better understanding of these motivations and react to them differently than leaders within the private sector. For example, some people are attracted to public service because they feel dedicated to working for the country, through patriotism, altruism, or some other form of social consciousness. They have some type of underlying desire to improve the world around them, which is known as public service motivation (PSM).⁶³ Most research shows that public sector employees have higher PSM than those who work in the private sector.⁶⁴ Researcher Edgar H. Schein found that:

The number of people showing up with this anchor is increasing. More and more young people, as well as mid-life career occupants, report that they are feeling the need not only to maintain an adequate income, but to do something meaningful in a larger context. As the world becomes more conscious of large scale problems such as the environment, the growing gap between the developed and the underdeveloped world, the problems of race and religion, product safety, privacy, overpopulation, and social responsibility issues around health and welfare, new kinds of organizations and careers are being created to address these issues. The information technology explosion has made all of the world's problems highly visible and thus drawn the attention of the more service oriented.⁶⁵

Not everyone seeks public sector work for the same reason, so each individual employee may have different levels of PSM. As a result, each may have different levels of morale or job satisfaction in the workplace. The manager must have a good understanding of the motivations of each employee and respond to employee needs based on those motivations.

⁶³ Taylor and Westover, "Job Satisfaction in the Public Service: The Effects of Public Service Motivation, Workplace Attributes and Work Relations," 732.

⁶⁴ James L. Perry and Annie Hondelghem, ed., *Motivation in Public Management: The Call of Public Service: The Call of Public Service* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁶⁵ Edgar H. Schein, "Career Anchors Revisited: Implications for Career Development in the 21st Century," *The Academy of Management Executive* 10, no. 4 (1996): 86.

Homeland security professionals are routinely exposed to traumatic events and daily stressors that far surpass what the average person has to deal with in the private sector.⁶⁶ While this exposure to large events is what many assume causes stress in the homeland security field, it is not the operational response that studies show has the most effect on employee satisfaction or PSM. While operational stressors are still important to consider, it is becoming more recognized that the most challenging aspects of the work associated with homeland security are embedded within organizational life.⁶⁷ Studies have been completed that examine the influence these operational and organizational stressors have on job satisfaction.⁶⁸

As noted above, the operational experiences of first responders (such as those who work within the homeland security discipline) are assumed to be the incidents that have the most impact on them, and thereby, affect their morale, satisfaction, and stress levels. These experiences are both positive (such as being recognized for quick and efficient response to an emergency) or negative (intense and unflattering public scrutiny). These experiences have varying degrees of effect on the job satisfaction of the employee.⁶⁹ Positive work experiences in the field have been identified as significantly increasing the level of cohesion between occupational roles, workplace identities, and expectations.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Laurence Miller, "Police Officer Stress: Syndromes and Strategies for Intervention," in *Behind the Badge: A Psychological Treatment Handbook for Law Enforcement Officers*, ed. Sharon M. Freeman, Lawrence Miller, Laurence Miller, Bret A. Moore, and Arthur Freeman (UK: Taylor & Francis, 2014), 121.

⁶⁷ Karena Burke and Douglas Paton, "Well-being in Protective Services Personnel Organisational Influences," *Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies* 2006–2 (2006):

⁶⁸ Karena J. Burke and Douglas Paton, "Predicting Police Officer Job Satisfaction: Traditional Versus Contemporary Models of Trauma in Occupational Experience," *Traumatology* 12, no. 3 (2006): 189–197.

⁶⁹ Peter M. Hart and Alexander J. Wearing, "Assessing Police Work Experiences: Development of the Police Daily Hassles and Uplifts Scales," *Journal of Criminal Justice* 21, no. 6 (1993): 553.

⁷⁰ C. Dunning, "Sense of Coherence in Managing Trauma Workers," in *Promoting Capabilities to Manage Posttraumatic Stress: Perspectives on Resilience*, ed. Douglas Paton, Joohn M. Violanti, and Leigh M. Smith (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 2003): 119–135.

The organizational experiences of first responders are those that take a wider view of the organization and consist of much of the behind the scenes workings and support functions. Some examples include job selection processes, socialization to culture, training programs, and professional standards review. All these (and more), combined with the current culture of the agency, contribute to the paradigm in which the employees experience both day-to-day work events, as well as critical incidents. For example, if the workplace has a high degree of perceived autonomy, less internal conflict and stress will occur when employees are placed in positions in which they have to make decisions without management review. Furthermore, the culture of the organization also includes bureaucratic, political, and economical pressures, which also place demands on the workers that affect their satisfaction and morale.⁷¹

Organizational culture has a significant influence on the way in which the field operations are interpreted and the manner to which they are responded. Therefore, based on the current culture at an organization, the outcome of an event can vary based on how the event is interpreted, the difference between understanding what needs to be done and responding efficiently and effectively, and then becoming confused and stressed about the event and dissatisfied with the direction and results. Political pressures can influence homeland security agencies to respond in a manner contrary to the instincts and beliefs of the line-level worker. An example is the conflict a young firefighter feels upon entering the workforce with great ideals and enthusiasm, only to come to the realization that many of the firefighter's peers do not want to change practices from how they have been done even if they can be improved upon. Political leadership may also may look at the newer employee as a threat to their plans and not support changes to procedures. The realization that a workplace contains these types of contrary objectives is difficult for employees to accept without having an effect on

⁷¹ Douglas Paton, John M. Violanti, and Leigh M. Smith, ed., *Promoting Capabilities to Manage Posttraumatic Stress: Perspectives on Resilience* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 2003).

their morale or job satisfaction.⁷² Organizational influences can severely affect the employee's adjustment into the homeland security job.

Since government and homeland security workers have different workplace characteristics, their preferences require specific attention to affect their satisfaction positively. These workers are more motivated by the intrinsic aspects of their work. They want to make a difference in the world and are interested in work that allows them to do that. While some may argue the point, they are less interested in what they are paid to do the job than their private sector counterparts.⁷³

Government workers are subjected to different experiences in the workplace. A clear example occurs during times of financial crisis, work stoppages, and potential government shutdowns. Private companies may feel financial strain as well, but they are less likely to experience the political pressure that public sector workers face, while being held to very strict accountability measures during audits or review processes. The public also consistently evaluates the performance of public sector agencies and are much more likely to weigh in on their performance.

D. STRESS DIFFERENCES

Key differences exist between jobs in the private sector and many of the jobs within the homeland security discipline. While many administrative tasks are similar in both public and private work, the public sector employee is exposed to more high stress incidents that cause psychological distress. This distress, if left unmanaged, may decrease job satisfaction and erode morale.

The homeland security field experiences many obvious stressors. Exposure to mass casualty incidents, shootings, emotionally deranged people,

⁷² John M. Violanti and Douglas Paton, ed., *Police Trauma: Psychological Aftermath of Civilian Combat* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1999).

⁷³ Marc Buelens and Herman Van den Broeck, "An Analysis of Differences in Work Motivation between Public and Private Sector Organizations," *Public Administration Review* 67, no. 1 (2007): 65–74.

large-scale weather emergencies, and displaced communities all place a large amount of demand on the responders.⁷⁴ However many other activities employees perform also add stress, but may be easier to overlook. Being a part of long-term recovery efforts in a broken community, dealing with public distrust and scrutiny, staffing shortages, in-fighting based on differing organizational citizenship levels, poor decision making by inexperienced managers, work/life balance incongruities, bureaucratic pressures, and poor information sharing, are just a few examples.⁷⁵ These situations may not expose an employee to physical harm or danger, but they cause high degrees of stress and frustration. For example, people providing support from an emergency operations center to field response personnel are supplying the tools and equipment that first responders need to do their job, but can be internally conflicted by a desire to be on-scene directly helping with the efforts. The listed situations also lower the employee's job satisfaction. The stressors that seem less obvious can have a greater overall cumulative effect on homeland security personnel, because of their constant presence, and thereby can erode morale, satisfaction, and resilience over time. The major events might be traumatic but occur far less often.

Police and first responder stress has been defined as an imbalance between what is required of responders and what they are truly capable of in situations in which failure can have significant consequences.⁷⁶ Responders who have better control of their environment are better able to deal with the stress and challenges of public sector work and are less likely to allow their morale levels to drop.⁷⁷ For this reason, autonomy in decision making (when possible) gives these employees the feeling of control in their behavior. Unfortunately,

⁷⁴ Chapin et al., "Training Police Leadership to Recognize and Address Operational Stress," 338–352.

⁷⁵ Hans Toch, *Stress in Policing* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2002).

⁷⁶ Bernie L. Patterson, "Job Experience and Perceived Job Stress Among Police, Correctional, and Probation/Parole Officers," *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 19, no. 3 (1992): 260–285.

⁷⁷ L. McCafferty, Erin McCafferty, and Margaret A. McCafferty, "Stress and Suicide in Police Officers: Paradigm of Occupational Stress," *Southern Medical Journal* 85, no. 3 (1992): 233–243.

critical incidents in the homeland security field do not always allow for autonomy. Homeland security employees' beliefs that their supervisor (or department policy) is not supportive adds to stress levels, diminishes morale, and changes the environment from therapeutic to adversarial.⁷⁸

Homeland security events have highly restrictive rules on how responders can engage with the people to which they are responding, whether it is a broken community or enemy combatants. These responders put themselves in harm's way and have to act based on deployment philosophies instituted by a command with which they may not agree. What they see and hear while serving in this function can cause satisfaction with their job to drop.

Supervisors should understand that homeland security employees can develop reactions to direct and indirect traumatic exposure that can include symptoms, such as insomnia and hyper vigilance, but also social distancing from co-workers, friends, and family. Frequently, this behavior is transient and has little effect on the workplace, and its effect on morale issues is also limited. Support from peers, friends, and family is all that is needed to maintain their psychological equilibrium. Sometimes, the reaction is severe enough that an impairment to occupational and social functioning occurs. It is called "acute stress disorder,"⁷⁹ which may lead to less job satisfaction and lower morale in the workgroup. Severe reactions that do not subside in several months can lead to PTSD.

The Oso Landslide in Washington State on March 22, 2014 caused high levels of stress in many responders, and not just those attempting to dig through the estimated eight million cubic meters looking for victims.⁸⁰ Geomorphologists

⁷⁸ Ni He and Nicholas Lovrich, "Predicting Five Dimensions of Police Officer Stress: Looking More Deeply into Organizational Settings for Sources of Police Stress," *Police Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (2002): 43–62.

⁷⁹ Chapin et al., "Training Police Leadership to Recognize and Address Operational Stress," 338–352.

⁸⁰ Richard Stone and Robert Service, "Even for Slide-Prone Region, Landslide Was Off the Chart," *Science Magazine*, April 2014, 16.

with the United States Geological Survey worked diligently around the clock to determine if more slides could occur or if the water backing up behind blocking debris would cause residential flooding. EOC and incident management team (IMT) personnel attempted to set up support centers quickly to provide all the logistics needed in the field. Personnel working in all areas of these coordinated responses feel the stress of the event and leaders need to be prepared to address those stressors before long-term job satisfaction and morale are affected.

Staying healthy, physically fit, well rested, and focused on the mission helps build resilience to stress.⁸¹ However, literature has shown that all employees, no matter what their state of mind, health, or fitness, have a finite ability to resist the overall effect of the stressors to which they are subjected.⁸² To adjust political or bureaucratic pressures, leaders need to make system-wide cultural changes. These changes could be an adjustment to day-to-day practices, bargaining agreements, or public image rebranding.

Supervisors need to recognize spikes in workplace stress and dips in morale and then take action in an effort to show support. Such support will lower the chances of chronic stress, help reduce absenteeism, turnover/early retirement, depression, substance abuse,⁸³ and suicide.⁸⁴

First line supervisors play a crucial role in monitoring the levels of distress and frustration within their specific workgroups. They are one of the first to become aware of emerging morale issues and stress indicators beyond the

⁸¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Field Manual 8-51: Combat and Operational Stress Control: Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2003).

⁸² Raymond B. Flannery and George S. Everly, "Crisis Intervention: A Review." *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health* 2, no. 2 (2000): 119–126.

⁸³ John M. Violanti, James R. Marshall, and Barbara Howe, "Stress, Coping, and Alcohol Use: The Police Connection," *Journal of Police Science & Administration* 13, no. 2 (1985): 106–110.

⁸⁴ Robert Loo, "A Meta-analysis of Police Suicide Rates: Findings and Issues," *Suicide and Life-threatening Behavior* 33, no. 3 (2003): 313–325.

norm. They can proactively address these issues with very basic interventions, such as one-on-one conversations, discussions at briefings, and peer support implementation. While nonclinical, it is effective. It helps normalize the work environment, facilitates employees' return to work after a critical event, reduces the chance that employees become labeled, and builds supervisor-subordinate relationships.

E. STRESS MANAGEMENT IN HOMELAND SECURITY

Line-level employees listed the following as sources of direct stress that led to poor morale.

- being second guessed by their supervisor during work in the field
- punishment for minor mistakes or punishment that does not fit the level of the wrong doing
- lack of recognition when performance goes above and beyond
- fear of being placed on administrative leave for performance, stress or personal problems, which could consist of the relinquishment of their duty weapon and ID⁸⁵

Amaranto investigated the job-related stress at a police department as it related violence and other traumatic issues. The results indicated that stressors within the department (such as rumors, loyalty issues, etc.) were more highly rated than those outside the department (such as exposure to unusual incidents, crimes of violence, etc.). Furthermore, employees were concerned about managers being resentful when they brought forth performance or other work-related issues.⁸⁶ They were concerned those supervisors might find seek out the whistleblower for minor violations of department policies in an effort to sequester the employee from the rest of the department.

⁸⁵ Ernesto Amaranto et al., "Police Stress Interventions," *Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention* 3, no. 1 (2003): 47.

⁸⁶ Olivia Johnson, "8 Ways Police Leaders Can Improve Morale," *Police One*, January 13, 2015, <http://www.policeone.com/police-leader/articles/8093432-8-ways-police-leaders-can-improve-morale/>.

People who work in the field of public safety are exposed to events outside of the norm. First responders, such as police officers and firefighters, see abnormal events on a daily basis, and those incidents can have a long-term effect on the workers exposed to them. While members of the general public might have an encounter from time-to-time that leaves them shocked, the public safety leader is concerned with the repetition of employee exposure. “Leadership needs to have a planned response to critical incident stress within their division, and one size does not fit all.”⁸⁷ All employees will react differently to what they see and feel differently about how they are treated afterwards. Many options are available to address exposure to significant events; the only wrong response is no response at all.

Twenty years ago, less was known about the psychological effects of the job.⁸⁸ Counseling was rare, and if it occurred at all, it was during peer interactions and frequently involved the consumption of alcohol.⁸⁹ While some type of open discussion about the stressors of public service is important, these discussions, commonly called “choir practice,” did not help employees develop the adaptive tools needed when exposed to psychological trauma.

A study of two aircraft disasters highlighted how first responders can be affected by the stress of their jobs and how that stress leads to disenfranchisement with their agencies, especially when the agencies do not address the employees’ exposure before morale levels drop. The events—a 1978 San Diego and 1986 Cerritos airplane crashes—had a similar response by police, fire, paramedics and administrative staff. A similar number of victims, similar number of homes destroyed, and a similar number of civilians were killed

⁸⁷ John DeRousse, “Critical Incident Stress Management (C-I-S-M),” *Medium*, last modified November 9, 2014, <https://medium.com/homeland-security/critical-incident-stress-managment-c-i-s-m-f8d41e2fa819>

⁸⁸ Olivia Johnson, “Blue Wall of Silence: Perceptions of the Influence of Training on Law Enforcement Suicide,” Lulu. com, 2011, <http://www.lulu.com/shop/olivia-johnson/blue-wall-of-silence-perceptions-of-the-influence-of-training-on-law-enforcement-suicide/paperback/product-21086323.html>.

⁸⁹ Elizabeth A. Willman, “Alcohol Use Among Law Enforcement,” *The Journal of Law Enforcement* 2, no. 3 (2012): 1–4.

on the ground.⁹⁰ In San Diego, mental health professionals (MHPs) were available for individual counseling. These MHPs are usually from outside the agency and rarely familiar with the culture of public safety workers. The workers sometimes lack trust in them, as they may be assigned by administrative staff, who the line-level may think are looking for ways to terminate them if they show signs of being affected by an event. In Cerritos, the agencies conducted 12 critical incident stress debriefings (CISDs) and provided follow-up contact through peers, counselors, or other means. CISDs are commonly conducted within the workgroup and provide an environment in which co-workers are allowed to discuss the event from an emotional perspective. Command staff rarely attend these debriefs but can start them off by letting the attendees know that the department cares about them, their morale levels, and their psychological health. While CISDs have their flaws,⁹¹ their strength lies in their injection of command staff support for the line-level.

In San Diego, five officers, seven firefighters, and 15 paramedics resigned within a year of the aircraft crash.⁹² An uptick (by 30%) also occurred in the number of employees seeking mental health treatment. Cerritos responders had a markedly different resignation rate. No police or firefighters resigned as a result of the incident. Only one paramedic resigned, and nearly zero difference occurred in the percentage of employees seeking mental health treatment before and after the incident.⁹³ This situation highlights a difference in results based on how an administration treats its employees within the public sector after events of consequence.

⁹⁰ Chapin et al., "Training Police Leadership to Recognize and Address Operational Stress," 338–352.

⁹¹ Jody McIntyre and Briana S. Nelson Goff, "Federal Disaster Mental Health Response and Compliance with Best Practices," *Community Mental Health Journal* 48, no. 6 (2012): 723–728.

⁹² Chapin et al., "Training Police Leadership to Recognize and Address Operational Stress," 338–352.

⁹³ George S. Everly Jr., Raymond B. Flannery Jr., and Jeffrey T. Mitchell, "Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM): A Review of the Literature," *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 5, no. 1 (2000): 23–40.

F. SUICIDE

Morale, job satisfaction, and stress may lead to law enforcement officers' suicide.⁹⁴ By providing a certain amount of intervention, as well as ensuring there is perceived supervisor support (PSS), officers will benefit in a variety of ways. In addition to being better at their day to day tasks, they are also able to better adjust to the stress of the profession. More importantly, they are more satisfied with their jobs. Thus, the establishment of peer support programs is worthwhile.

Suicide statistics are hard to calculate because they are not always reported, but according to the National Police Suicide Foundation,⁹⁵ four to 10 times the number of law enforcement officers commit suicide than the number of officers killed in the line of duty. The factors that contribute to suicide—mental health issues, addictions, relationship woes, etc.—are embarrassing, and due to the stigma associated with them, the reasons behind the deaths are either underreported or the scene is altered by family members who do not want the suicide revealed to others. Critical incident stress management (CISM) programs can help provide the intervention necessary for public safe employees having suicidal thoughts.

Some employers provide specific rewards to employees who take positive action to improve their morale or their peers' morale that could be through the presentation of challenge coins or the movement of those employees into special assignments. Employees who help peers during times of frustration, help them deal with adjustments in policy, and help legitimize the stressors employees feel within the homeland security discipline, are recognized for their informal leadership. The culture in organizations where seeking help is encouraged, and frustrations are professionally shared without risk of retribution, gives employees positive social outlets and go a long way toward improving morale. If employees' morale is allowed to erode considerably, their simple frustrations may gain

⁹⁴ Amaranto et al., "Police Stress Interventions," 47.

⁹⁵ "Facts," accessed January 23, 2015, <http://serveprotect.org/about/facts/>.

momentum and turn into distaste for the organization. This distaste could ultimately result in disciplinary action based on unprofessional outbursts, abuse of sick leave, or other forms of inappropriate behavior. Morale issues then become self-perpetuating, as poor morale leads to inappropriate behavior, which leads to discipline, which leads to more distaste for the organization, and so forth.

G. PEER SUPPORT

A peer support program—a program that functions as a subset under CISM—is a simple way for agencies to provide support to employees whose normal coping skills are compromised. Being a member of peer support starts with caring about co-workers, and having a level of trust with them. However, additional training also helps designated peers recognize when people are in crisis and where to direct them for professional help, when needed. This interaction occurs confidentially, and without most other employees even knowing it is occurring, but it helps stressed employees and improves the workgroup's morale.

Every company, both public and private, should consider having a peer support program. This type of program costs very little and few labor hours are needed to organize one. The trained peer is the first indication an agency will receive concerning whether an employee is having problems that are above and beyond the routine. How is it possible to know if that week of sick leave is because of the flu or due to a major alcohol binge? Peer support employees help with these issues and direct employees to employee assistance programs, social services, or merely provide a constructive ear to those who need to vent.⁹⁶ When the team consists of employees with trained CISM skills, and the integrity to keep their conversations confidential, agency leaders may rarely even know the

⁹⁶ John DeRousse, "Critical Incident Stress Management (C-I-S-M)," *Medium*, last modified November 9, 2014, <https://medium.com/homeland-security/critical-incident-stress-managment-c-i-s-m-f8d41e2fa819>

amount of problems being obverted. Problems that are avoided might turn into a serious crisis at work if allowed to grow without intervention.⁹⁷

While peer support is important, sometimes it is not enough. Other tools associated with CISM, including crisis intervention stress debriefs and crisis management briefings, should be used when peer support is not able reach out to all of those responders involved in a significant event or disaster.⁹⁸ The costs of some CISM tools are prohibitive, primarily due to the labor expenses created when getting all involved personnel together in one place. However, they have the benefit of reaching more people in a short period of time than individual meetings. While similar, they have some unique differences worthy of discussion. The public safety leader should understand the differences and when to implement each one.

H. CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS DEBRIEFING

A CISD is a seven-step small group intervention process. It is not psychotherapy, and all the trained personnel involved understand that it does not replace professional counseling, but those in attendance can be referred to additional therapy based on their needs. It is a focused discussion about a traumatic event led by trained CISM personnel. It is homogeneous. In other words, the uninvolved department head, family members, or other concerned co-workers cannot attend. A small group intervention allows people to share their individual feelings and one of its goals is to reestablish group cohesion and the performance of the unit. The attendees are guided through this group storytelling and provided with practical information to help them normalize their reactions to the event and aid in their recovery. It should only be used in the aftermath of an event significant enough to have generated strong reactions across the entire

⁹⁷ Carol S. North et al., "Workplace Response of Companies Exposed to the 9/11 World Trade Center Attack: A Focus-group Study," *Disasters* 37, no. 1 (2013): 101–118.

⁹⁸ June Ann Smith and Joann Jankoski, "Disaster Behavioral Health: Counselors Responding to Terrorism," in *Trauma Counseling: Theories and Interventions*, ed. Lisa Lopez Levers (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2012), 454.

group. In other words, dysfunction has occurred and the normal group coping skills are not working.⁹⁹ Evidence shows that properly run CISDs help regain cohesion in the workgroup and improve morale.¹⁰⁰

I. CRISIS MANAGEMENT BRIEFING

A crisis management briefing (CMB) has some substantial differences but also has its place in the realm of CISM.¹⁰¹ It is also an intervention technique designed to mitigate the effects of a significant event. However, it is a larger scale tool used when the number of people touched by the event cannot meet in small groups for a focused interaction, such as a Katrina-sized incident. These briefings are useful after large terrorist events, active shooters, or other substantial events at which responders number in the hundreds. The CMB can accommodate up to 300 people and its goal is to provide information about the incident, control rumors, provide education on psychological distress, how to deal with stress management, and identify resources for additional support. They are good ways to disseminate factual information, reduce some of the confusion, and give leaders some credibility. Again, outside personnel are not invited into a crisis management briefing, especially media. At the end of a CMB, a short question and answer session is allowed and peer support personnel wander through the crowd in an effort to identify anyone who may be exhibiting psychological trauma. It resembles the town-hall meeting of the CISM techniques.

⁹⁹ John DeRousse, "Critical Incident Stress Management (C-I-S-M)," *Medium*, last modified November 9, 2014, <https://medium.com/homeland-security/critical-incident-stress-managment-c-i-s-m-f8d41e2fa819>

¹⁰⁰ Adam Thiel, *Special Report: the Aftermath of Firefighter Fatality Incidents: Preparing for the Worst* (Washington, DC: FEMA, 2013).

¹⁰¹ Steven L. Chumley, "The Best Approach to Crisis Intervention" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2012).

IV. ANALYSIS

A. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

In an effort to frame and understand the data collected on morale within the public sector, this thesis used force-field analysis. This analysis (see Figure 1) is a common decision-making tool that helps evaluate choices by reviewing and analyzing the forces both for and against a decision. All the forces both for and against a decision are listed on either side of the analysis diagram, and then each force is weighted by its strength. A score of one is a low-level force, while a score of five is a force with much influence. After all the factors are listed, both the “for” and “against” scores are added to provide a total that helps decide which direction most force is acting in an agency. By framing most of the factors being considered in the decision-making process, the force-field analysis helps communicate what thoughts and effort went into it. It also allows others to evaluate an agency’s decision making.

Homeland security leaders can use a force-field analysis for two purposes. In the case of this thesis, it can be used to ascertain whether to implement a change at their agency. In the case of this thesis, the force-field analysis is used to determine whether to implement a change that influences morale. Secondly, the tool can be used to improve the chances of a change being successful. Since the tool not only indicates factors that influence and hinder the change, but also the strength of those factors, the force-field analysis allows leadership to strengthen the forces that support the change and reduce those that do not.

While the tool appears simplistic, various factors must be considered when creating it. In Force Field Analysis, the authors recommended the following questions be considered:

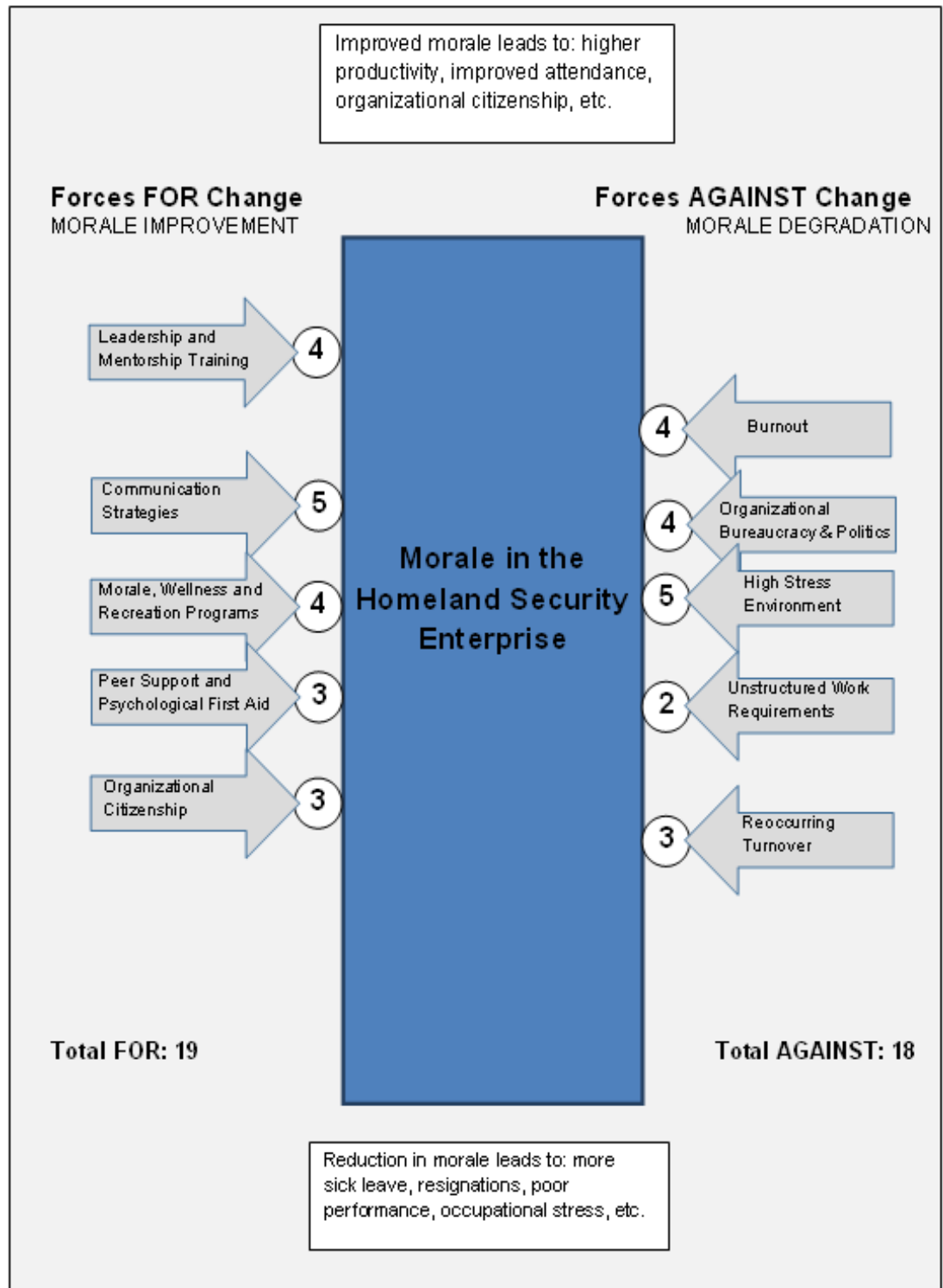
- What benefit will the change deliver?
- Who supports the change?
- Who is against it? Why?

- How easy will it be to make the change?
- Are there time constraints?
- Do you have enough time and resources to make it work?
- What costs are involved?
- What other business processes will be affected by the change?
- What are the risks?¹⁰²

This thesis examined the literature and identified many of the factors that influenced morale within the homeland security discipline. As noted in the diagram, scores (1–5) were assigned to each force based on the research and the number is shown at the tip of each arrow. A total of both the forces for and forces against is shown at the bottom of the figure.

¹⁰² “Force Field Analysis.”

Figure 1. Morale within the Homeland Security Enterprise—
Force Field Analysis



B. MORALE INFLUENCES

Research has shown that factors affecting job satisfaction and morale in the public sector are related to various inputs. One factor is the makeup of the employees, including their personal characteristics and mindset. In some cases, employees with more longevity in the workplace had higher levels of dissatisfaction.¹⁰³ In other studies, it was shown that the employees with PSM (when they had a strong desire to serve the interests of the community) are much more satisfied on the job.¹⁰⁴ Organizational factors in the public sector have also been linked to job satisfaction. One study found various environmental factors that affected workplace satisfaction. They included opportunities for promotion, relationship with supervisors, fringe benefits, and others. The study suggested that these factors were “investments” into the employee, which provided future benefit for the agency. In Australia, a study by Noblet and Rodwell found that officers given more autonomy in their decision making and more independence on how they managed their call response were more satisfied. The officers’ belief that they were supported by their supervisors and co-workers made them happier at work and they also had higher morale.¹⁰⁵

The differences between public and private workplaces are important factors because those working for government agencies (such as those within the homeland security enterprise) do not have the advantages of unencumbered work environments but rather work within institutional settings with culture and practices that strongly regulate behavior. That regulated behavior is due to structures within the public service workplace that can be formal, informal,

¹⁰³ Carol Ann Traut, Rick Larsen, and Steven H. Feimer, “Hanging On or Fading Out? Job Satisfaction and the Long-term Worker,” *Public Personnel Management* 29, no. 3 (2000): 343–351.

¹⁰⁴ Katherine C. Naff and John Crum, “Working for America Does Public Service Motivation Make a Difference?,” *Review of Public Personnel Administration* 19, no. 4 (1999): 5–16; Sanjay K. Pandey and Edmund C. Stazyk, “Antecedents and Correlates of Public Service Motivation,” in *Motivation in Public Management: The Call of Public Service*, ed. James L. Perry and Annie Hondeghem (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2008), 101–117.

¹⁰⁵ Andrew J. Noblet and John J. Rodwell, “Identifying the Predictors of Employee Health and Satisfaction in an NPM Environment: Testing a Comprehensive and Non-linear Demand-control-Support Model,” *Public Management Review* 11, no. 5 (2009): 663–683.

structural, societal, or political based on studies of public service agencies from across the world.¹⁰⁶ Sub-groups within public sector agencies (such as individuals or leadership) can have their own particular agenda; however, they will attempt to reach their goals through the rules set by the existing structure. It includes the rules and norms that have been established and define the behavior that is acceptable within that particular agency. These rules influence the diverse people within the public sector organization differently depending on their place within the organization.

Job satisfaction and morale of the government worker are the result of various factors: PSM, workplace characteristics, relationships within the work group, and the culture of the agency.

1. Public Service Motivation

PSM is defined as an individual's "predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations."¹⁰⁷ It directly relates to job satisfaction because it provides the paradigm or filter through which employees see their work, and thereby, helps define how they feel about the workplace. It is a need that must be fulfilled by the employee or the employer. It is to this extent that opportunities for people to meet their altruistic intent should be supported by the supervisors. Those workers who put higher levels of importance on PSM are more likely to be satisfied in their jobs.¹⁰⁸ For example, when an employee or workgroup is dedicated towards a cause, they are significantly more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction that includes

¹⁰⁶ Wouter Vandenaabeele and Steven Van de Walle, "International Differences in Public Service Motivation: Comparing Regions across the World," in *Motivation in Public Management: The Call of Public Service*, ed. James L. Perry and Annie Hondeghem (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2008), 223–244.

¹⁰⁷ James L. Perry and Lois Recascino Wise, "The Motivational Bases of Public Service," *Public Administration Review* 50, no. 3 (1990): 367–373.

¹⁰⁸ Taylor and Westover, "Job Satisfaction in the Public Service: The Effects of Public Service Motivation, Workplace Attributes and Work Relations," 731–751.

both new employees and those with more tenure.¹⁰⁹ PSM has a direct positive correlation with job satisfaction.¹¹⁰

2. Workplace Characteristics

The work environment has been the subject of study for decades. From Elton Mayo's study of the Hawthorne Electric Company in the 1920s, to Frederick Herzberg's review of the workplace environment's effect on job satisfaction in the 1950s and 1960s, many scholars have studied how factors within the job setting can improve or deter morale levels. Herzberg used a two-prong approach to the subject. He divided motivation within the workplace into intrinsic and extrinsic influences. Intrinsic influences include factors, such as job content, variety, autonomy, trust, etc. Extrinsic factors are more contextual. They include pay, bonuses, job security, retirement benefits, and health insurance, etc. Most comparative studies that examine the differences in public sector and private sector companies indicate that workers in the public sector value intrinsic factors over extrinsic ones. A good example is the value public sector employees place on the importance of work. They place more value on it than they do on high income. The private sector reverses these values and employees show that their desire to have a high income overshadows their desire to have important work to do.

The reason public sector employees define their works as important is related to their desire to work on something that has an impact on their community, public policy, or public affairs. Public sector employees also place more value on autonomy, inspirational or interesting work, and the opportunity to learn different parts of the job.¹¹¹ In general terms, public sector employees have better opportunities to be satisfied with their jobs, than when viewing them in

¹⁰⁹ Anna Haley-Lock, "Happy Doing Good? How Workers' Career Orientations and Job Satisfaction Relate in Grassroots Human Services," *Journal of Community Practice* 16, no. 2 (2008): 143–163.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Sue A. Frank and Gregory B. Lewis, "Government Employees Working Hard or Hardly Working?," *The American Review of Public Administration* 34, no. 1 (2004): 36–51.

comparison with their private sector counterparts because of the intrinsic opportunities.¹¹² If homeland security leaders attempt to inject jobs that make workers feel both autonomous and significant, studies show that they can significantly improve the job satisfaction of employees.¹¹³

Despite the importance of intrinsic benefits, such as autonomy, leaders in homeland security should also be considering extrinsic factors that help motivate employees: money, training programs, pay increases, higher status levels, and job security, etc. While not as pronounced, government workers have shown to be satisfied and motivated by opportunities for promotion.¹¹⁴ Studies also indicate that employer-provided benefits commonly synonymous with public sector work—such as vacation, sick time, retirement programs and pension programs—provide a secure environment for workers and contribute to their satisfaction.¹¹⁵

3. Work Relationships

Studies have shown that positive work relationships with peers and supervisors¹¹⁶ raise job satisfaction levels.¹¹⁷ When compared with their private sector partners, government employees place more value on supportive

¹¹² Debora S. Schneider and Bobby C. Vaught, "A Comparison of Job Satisfaction between Public and Private Sector Managers," *Public Administration Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (1993): 68–83.

¹¹³ J. Barton Cunningham and James MacGregor, "Trust and the Design of Work Complementary Constructs in Satisfaction and Performance," *Human Relations* 53, no. 12 (2000): 1575–1591.

¹¹⁴ Garrido, Pérez, and Antón, "Determinants of Sales Manager Job Satisfaction. An Analysis of Spanish Industrial Firms," 1934–1954.

¹¹⁵ Mary K. Feeney, "Sector Perceptions Among State-Level Public Managers," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 18, no. 3 (2008): 465–494.

¹¹⁶ Michael D. Reiner and Jihong Zhao, "The Determinants of Job Satisfaction Among United States Air Force Security Police A Test of Rival Theoretical Predictive Models," *Review of Public Personnel Administration* 19, no. 3 (1999): 5–18.

¹¹⁷ Edward J. Harrick, Gene R. Vanek, and Joseph F. Michlitsch, "Alternate Work Schedules, Productivity, Leave Usage, and Employee Attitudes: A Field Study," *Public Personnel Management* 15, no. 2 (1986): 159–169.

workplace environments,¹¹⁸ co-worker and supervisor relationships,¹¹⁹ and respond more favorably to personal leadership styles.¹²⁰

Interestingly, a difference exists in the degree to which supervisors and peers influence an employee's job satisfaction. Studies have shown that employees are more influenced by the relationships they have with their peers than they are by supervisor relationships.¹²¹ While relationships are important, they are not as important as the intrinsic workplace attributes, which appear to be the more important determinant of workplace satisfaction¹²².

4. Autonomy

Studies have shown that most employees within government agencies (from leaders to line-level employees) would benefit from a culture that gives them greater autonomy in their decision making. Unfortunately, it is not always possible in government work, where protocols requiring specific responses and behavior are established and expected of most personnel.¹²³ The "red tape" commonly associated with government works against free decision making at all levels. If free decision making were allowed, it might conflict with the external political pressures that guide procedures in the government sector.

¹¹⁸ Buelens and Van den Broeck, "An Analysis of Differences in Work Motivation between Public and Private Sector Organizations," 65–74.

¹¹⁹ Barry Z. Posner and Warren H. Schmidt, "The Values of Business and Federal Government Executives: More Different than Alike," *Public Personnel Management* 25, no. 3 (1996): 277–289.

¹²⁰ Rachid Zeffane, "Patterns of Organizational Commitment and Perceived Management Style: A Comparison of Public and Private Sector Employees," *Human Relations* 47, no. 8 (1994): 977–1010.

¹²¹ Leisa D. Sargent and Deborah J. Terry, "The Moderating Role of Social Support in Karasek's Job Strain Model," *Work & Stress* 14, no. 3 (2000): 245–261.

¹²² Bram Steijn, "Human Resource Management and Job Satisfaction in the Dutch Public Sector," *Review of Public Personnel Administration* 24, no. 4 (2004): 291–303.

¹²³ Taylor and Westover, "Job Satisfaction in the Public Service: The Effects of Public Service Motivation, Workplace Attributes and Work Relations," 731–751.

5. Recovery

Public sector workers commonly have to work beyond normal shift times, or respond to events outside their normal patterns of sleep.¹²⁴ This disruption can lead to incidents in which employees are not fully rested (or recovered) when they return to work. When not fully replenished or well-rested, their daily job performance suffers. This lack of rest may lead to feelings of poor morale or dissatisfaction with their job, especially when considering their job created the state of fatigue. Individuals show higher productivity and performance on days that they have completely recovered by the beginning of their shifts. Along the same lines, employees who have less control over their jobs are likely to be more affected by poor recovery, as they would have less opportunity to adjust their shifts and capitalize on additional rest. Also of importance to note is that studies have shown that recovery during break periods is positively related to subsequent performance.¹²⁵ Thus, it would be a good idea for public sector leaders to integrate recovery processes and resource replenishment into the practices of workers. Performance and job related goals are easier to reach when a person is well-rested and feels recovered. Therefore, not only does performance improve, but workers also experience less psychological strain. It is easier for employees to stay focused on their tasks, which results in a better product in less time. In the public sector, it gives the employer reason to recognize and celebrate the work of the employee. The costs of continued high levels of effort without breaks include fatigue and failures at work.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Binnewies, Sonnentag, and Mojza, "Daily Performance at Work: Feeling Recovered in the Morning As a Predictor of Day-level Job Performance," 67–93.

¹²⁵ John P. Trougakos et al., "Making the Break Count: An Episodic Examination of Recovery Activities, Emotional Experiences, and Positive Affective Displays," *Academy of Management Journal* 51, no. 1 (2008): 131–146.

¹²⁶ Gituru Wahiti Robert and Jenny Hockey, "Compensatory Control in the Regulation of Human Performance under Stress and High Workload: A Cognitive-energetical Framework," *Biological Psychology* 45, no. 1 (1997): 73–93.

Taking this scenario a step further, the well-rested worker also shows more pro-active behavior at work.¹²⁷ Those who were highly recovered when starting their work shift had better task performance metrics but were also more likely to help others during the course of their shifts. These employees show higher levels of OCB and strive to do work above and beyond their job description because they feel more connected to the organization. If organizations show support for workers' opportunity to refresh or recover, they can indirectly improve work performance. This support can be shown through activities at work that unplug employees and give them time to refresh, such as physical fitness time, leisure time activities, and celebrations. Recovery can also be reinforced through support of the employees' life outside of work (such as their family).¹²⁸ This support allows for better recovery outside of the workplace and refreshed employees when they return to work. Other ideas for helping employees refresh include training that helps employees and their families stay in tune with the psychological stressors of the workplace and the best ways to recover from them. Of course, what employees do in their off time, for the most part, is up to them.

6. Burnout

Burnout within the homeland security enterprise is a common phenomenon. It occurs in both line-level employees and in the managers who supervise them. Once onset, it has a significant negative impact on employees and their morale in the workplace.¹²⁹ Burnout is the over accumulation of work-related stress and frustration. Employers who do not make attempts to reduce that stress will suffer the consequences when performance suffers. Burnout is

¹²⁷ Sabine Sonnentag, "Recovery, Work Engagement, and Proactive Behavior: A New Look at the Interface between Nonwork and Work," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 88, no. 3 (2003): 518.

¹²⁸ Jonathon R. B. Halbesleben, "Sources of Social Support and Burnout: A Meta-analytic Test of the Conservation of Resources Model," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 91, no. 5 (2006): 1134.

¹²⁹ Jonathon R. B. Halbesleben and M. Ronald Buckley, "Burnout in Organizational Life," *Journal of Management* 30, no. 6 (2004): 859–879.

described as “a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do ‘people work’ of some kind.”¹³⁰

This definition describes burnout as consisting of three parts: “emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment”¹³¹. Exhaustion references the depletion of emotional resources. Once depleted, employees have less adaptive skills to address the stress of the workplace and to conduct the job functions. Without intervention, the work suffers. Depersonalization is also known as cynicism (or disengagement) and is the response to the exhaustive state. Employees become further and further detached from the work and become more negative about the job, their abilities, their peers, and others they encounter. Reduced personal accomplishment is an internal belief that employees feel, who accept they cannot perform their work at the same level as they have in the past.¹³²

Unfortunately, as more and more is expected of the employee, the chances of burnout increases. Burnout has been linked to damage within social exchange relationships.¹³³ Feelings of inequity in workplace relationships may lead to burnout. For example, if employees within homeland security feel they invest more in the relationship they have with the employer than the employer invests in them, they may feel disenfranchised. This exchange relationship with the organization is important and needs to maintain a balance or either the workers will feel unappreciated or management will feel the workers are not

¹³⁰ Christina Maslach, *Burnout: The Cost of Caring* (Los Altos, CA: ISHK, 2003).

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Halbesleben and Buckley, “Burnout in Organizational Life,” 859–879.

¹³³ Bram P. Buunk and Wilmar B. Schaufeb, “Professional Burnout: A Perspective from Social Comparison Theory,” in *Professional Burnout Recent Developments in Theory and Research*, ed. Wilmar B. Schaufeh, Christina Maslach, and Tadeusz Marek (New York: Hemisphere, 1993), 53–69.

engaged.¹³⁴ Somewhat related are studies on social comparison information as it relates to burnout. Social comparison is the act of workers comparing themselves with their peers. If supervisors are perceived to pay more attention to one employee over another, chances of burnout are higher and morale suffers.¹³⁵ Thus, it can be concluded that supervisors need to pay particular attention to the manner and time they spend on individual relationships in the workplace. While, in some cases, having a relationship with a supervisor is a resource, it can also be a stressor if those relationships give off the perception that supervisors have “favorites.”

Burnout leads to poor attitudes in the workplace and less satisfied employees.¹³⁶ It also leads to higher turnover or the intention to leave a business.¹³⁷ Lastly, burnout is shown to affect the physiological symptoms of employees. The far-reaching effects of burnout, to include the overall effect it may have on the morale of the organization, reinforce the need for supervisors to understand it and its potential to disrupt an organization if not dealt with proactively.

Opportunities to address burnout are divided into two categories, attempts to change the individual and attempts to change the organization. For the most part, programs to address individual burnout are more common because burnout is commonly considered a personal issue. Burnout is either considered to affect only one individual at a time, or that it is much easier to fix one person at a time. Teaching coping skills is the most common manner that employers address

¹³⁴ Wilmar B. Schaufeli, Dirk van Dierendonck, and Karin Van Gorp, “Burnout and Reciprocity: Towards a Dual-level Social Exchange Model,” *Work & Stress* 10, no. 3 (1996): 225–237.

¹³⁵ Karen I. van der Zee, Arnold B. Bakker, and Bram P. Buunk, “Burnout and Reactions to Social Comparison Information among Volunteer Caregivers,” *Anxiety, Stress and Coping* 14, no. 4 (2001): 391–410.

¹³⁶ Jo Ellen Moore, “Why Is This Happening? A Causal Attribution Approach to Work Exhaustion Consequences,” *Academy of Management Review* 25, no. 2 (2000): 335–349.

¹³⁷ Brett Drake and Gautam N. Yadama, “A Structural Equation Model of Burnout and Job Exit among Child Protective Services Workers,” *Social Work Research* 20, no. 3 (1996): 179–187.

burned out employees.¹³⁸ Unfortunately, coping skills have not been universally successful in helping with burnout, and it may be in an agency's best interest to attempt to address the problems proactively that lead to burnout in the first place.¹³⁹ Another option would be to attempt to make changes to the work environment, as it would certainly address the problem of burnout before it occurs. Sometimes, burnout is a result of the goals and expectations of the employee and the expectations of the employer not being equal. Some studies have shown that programs that identify these inconsistencies and work towards adjusting them to common ground reduce burnout.¹⁴⁰ Unfortunately, within the field of homeland security, many of the organizational stressors that employees deal with cannot be eliminated. Therefore, employers need to address those that they can, and provide support for employees that will allow them to deal with the effects.

Burnout can have costs in terms of mental health,¹⁴¹ physical health, and labor costs to the organization.¹⁴² People suffering from burnout cannot only be exhibiting poor morale, but their mood can become contagious to others, thereby causing burnout in other employees. Furthermore, a large portion of disability claims filed by workers are a result of burnout and are costly to employers and long-term disability insurers.¹⁴³ It also places great burden on co-workers who

¹³⁸ Christina Maslach and Julie Goldberg, "Prevention of Burnout: New Perspectives," *Applied and Preventive Psychology* 7, no. 1 (1999): 63–74.

¹³⁹ John R. Freedy and Stevan E. Hobfoll, "Stress Inoculation for Reduction of Burnout: A Conservation of Resources Approach," *Anxiety, Stress and Coping* 6, no. 4 (1994): 311–325.

¹⁴⁰ Dirk Van Dierendonck, Wilmar B. Schaufeli, and Bram P. Buunk, "The Evaluation of an Individual Burnout Intervention Program: The Role of Inequity and Social Support," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 83, no. 3 (1998): 392.

¹⁴¹ Jasmine Y. Huynh, Despoina Xanthopoulou, and Anthony H. Winefield, "Social Support Moderates the Impact of Demands on Burnout and Organizational Connectedness: A Two-wave Study of Volunteer Firefighters," *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* 18, no. 1 (2013): 9.

¹⁴² International Labor Office, *World Labour Report 1993* (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1993).

¹⁴³ Christina Maslach, Wilmar B. Schaufeli, and Michael P. Leiter, "Job Burnout," *Annual Review of Psychology* 52, no. 1 (2001): 397–422.

need to compensate for the poor performance of their peers while dealing with their altered mood and reduced productivity.

7. Turnover

People leaving organizations have a substantial impact on their ability to do their job.¹⁴⁴ The cost of hiring and training replacements can be 1½ times an annual salary,¹⁴⁵ depending on the nature of the job. The loss of institutional knowledge is also a concern, as every employee who leaves takes a large amount of experience and history with them. Employers need to hire and train replacements.

Concerns have been raised that low morale may influence an employee to leave an organization voluntarily. Therefore, creating an environment that improves the chances of employees staying long term helps to reduce costs and improve the productivity of the workgroup. Employers should strive to manage and better understand why employees leave organizations. If they are leaving for morale issues, then work should be conducted to address those issues before employees reach the point at which they cannot be recovered by the agency.

Homeland security employees are valuable because of a unique skill set. Their abilities include knowledge of the proprietary systems, how information flows, and other institutional knowledge. Losing that human capital generates stalls in the system and creates problems with the agency's effectiveness. In addition to morale challenges, agencies also have to face changes in the demographic, such as the retirement of a large portion of the work group (e.g., baby boomers) or cultural changes in the group entering the workforce (e.g., the new age of employees who do not feel as loyal to an agency in the long term¹⁴⁶). Employers have some influence over morale, but no matter what the cause of

¹⁴⁴ Rodger W. Griffeth and Peter WW Hom, *Retaining Valued Employees* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001).

¹⁴⁵ William G. Bliss, "Cost of Employee Turnover," *The Advisor*, 2013.

¹⁴⁶ Peter Cappelli, "Will There Really Be a Labor Shortage?," *Human Resource Management* 44, no. 2 (2005): 143–149.

turnover, they should better understand the underlying causes and do what they can to control them. This thesis focuses on the causal linkages to turnover, such as morale, job satisfaction, and perceived organization support, etc. Moreover, research shows that global attitudes within the organization can lead to turnover, or the thoughts of turnover, which thereby leads to turnover.¹⁴⁷

Would not employers want to do their best to reduce the cognitive thoughts that lead to turnover before employees are on the way out? Much of the research on turnover has focused on job satisfaction or pay issues, but a portion of the research also discusses relationships (such as supervisor-subordinate, or organization-worker) that reinforce the need for supervisors to build relationships with their direct reports.

8. POS and PSS Effect

POS and PSS have both been linked to morale and turnover. As previously stated, both outputs can be influenced by the supervisor and organization, respectively. They can help improve work life and reduce thoughts of turnover by the employee, which, in turn, reduces the potential for an employee to leave the organization voluntarily. Employees establish a belief of how much the department values their well-being and respects their contributions.¹⁴⁸ Research shows that the higher the POS, the higher the workplace outcomes, such as productivity.¹⁴⁹ A correlation of -.51 occurs

¹⁴⁷ Carl P. Maertz et al., "The Effects of Perceived Organizational Support and Perceived Supervisor Support on Employee Turnover," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 28, no. 8 (2007): 1059–1075.

¹⁴⁸ Hutchison et al., "Perceived Organizational Support," 500–507.

¹⁴⁹ David G. Allen, Lynn M. Shore, and Rodger W. Griffeth, "The Role of Perceived Organizational Support and Supportive Human Resource Practices in the Turnover Process," *Journal of Management* 29, no. 1 (2003): 99–118; Robert Eisenberger et al., "Reciprocation of Perceived Organizational Support," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 86, no. 1 (2001): 42; Linda Rhoades and Robert Eisenberger, "Perceived Organizational Support: A Review of the Literature," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87, no. 4 (2002): 698.

between POS and turnover intention and -.11 occurs between POS and turnover behavior.¹⁵⁰

Employees can separate POS from PSS, which is the degree to which supervisors value their contributions to the agency, or how much they generally care about their well-being.¹⁵¹ PSS has shown to relate significantly to important outcome metrics.¹⁵² For example, during studies of Army officers, it was shown that one-on-one support and mentoring from direct supervisors improved satisfaction and significantly reduced turnover intentions.¹⁵³ Could not that mentoring be included at all levels within the homeland security discipline? Other studies have shown that PSS is negatively correlated with turnover. Eisenberger et al. measured that correlation at -.11.¹⁵⁴ This number would indicate that workgroups with poor morale should be shown support so that their willingness to leave the organization is minimized. When employees feel they are supported in the organization, they will feel they are getting more encouragement, which will likely improve their morale and connection, and commitment to the organization itself. A happy, committed employee is less likely to leave,¹⁵⁵ but even an unhappy employee who perceived support from an organization or supervisor may feel more committed to staying longer with the agency.¹⁵⁶ Thus, while

¹⁵⁰ Rhoades and Eisenberger, "Perceived Organizational Support: A Review of the Literature," 698.

¹⁵¹ Janet L. Kottke and Clare E. Sharafinski, "Measuring Perceived Supervisory and Organizational Support," *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 48, no. 4 (1988): 1075–1079.

¹⁵² Maertz et al., "The Effects of Perceived Organizational Support and Perceived Supervisor Support on Employee Turnover," 1059–1075.

¹⁵³ Stephanie C. Payne and Ann H. Huffman, "A Longitudinal Examination of the Influence of Mentoring on Organizational Commitment and Turnover," *Academy of Management Journal* 48, no. 1 (2005): 158–168.

¹⁵⁴ Robert Eisenberger et al., "Perceived Supervisor Support: Contributions to Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Retention," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87, no. 3 (2002): 565.

¹⁵⁵ James G. March and Herbert Alexander Simon, *Organizations* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1958).

¹⁵⁶ Carl P. Maertz and Rodger W. Griffeth, "Eight Motivational Forces and Voluntary Turnover: A Theoretical Synthesis with Implications for Research," *Journal of Management* 30, no. 5 (2004): 667–683.

supervisor support might improve satisfaction, it may also reduce turnover intentions even if the employee's morale does not improve.

It is important to note that several studies indicate that POS and PSS do not operate separately from each other, but that POS is fully mediated through PSS.¹⁵⁷ In other words, the supervisor embodies the organization in the eye of employee. This perception would indicate that the direct supervisor has the most control over the employee's morale and would have the important job of keeping the employee attached to the organization through mentorship and relationship building.

Some studies have also indicated that employees can differentiate between organizational support and supervisor support.¹⁵⁸ In an effort to link this support with homeland security, it could be symbolized by officers who have a great relationship with their sergeant but are discouraged by decision making at the command staff level, or DHS employees in California dedicated to their managers but are frustrated by decisions sent to the office from Washington, DC. When this separation is established, employees can more clearly differentiate between the two support systems. Even in cases in which a geographical separation occurs, employees can still remain committed to the organization and will look at both systems independently.¹⁵⁹ At other times, employees will focus their intention (and place blame or support) on the entity or the person that delivers the message.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Eisenberger et al., "Perceived Supervisor Support: Contributions to Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Retention," 565; Linda Rhoades, Robert Eisenberger, and Stephen Armeli, "Affective Commitment to the Organization: The Contribution of Perceived Organizational Support," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 86, no. 5 (2001): 825.

¹⁵⁸ Kurt T. Dirks and Donald L. Ferrin, "Trust in Leadership: Meta-Analytic Findings and Implications for Research and Practice," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87, no. 4 (2002): 611.

¹⁵⁹ Maertz and Griffeth, "Eight Motivational Forces and Voluntary Turnover: A Theoretical Synthesis with Implications for Research," 667–683.

¹⁶⁰ David A. Hofmann and Frederick P. Morgeson, "Safety-related Behavior As a Social Exchange: The Role of Perceived Organizational Support and Leader–member Exchange," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 84, no. 2 (1999): 286.

In the public sector, where many of the tools that the private sector might use to show organizational support are less possible, other policies to improve support perception might be implemented. For example, redistributing employees, providing food and beverage, increasing supply budgets, allocating physical fitness time, fitness contests, child care discounts/programs, comp time, flex time, and assigned vehicles, etc. might all be utilized to increase the level of POS. The organization should not miss opportunities to publicize its efforts to the workgroup, in person, and in writing.

Some supervisors struggle with showing support for their direct reports. Those managers with poor social or interpersonal skills may find it hard to engage their employees. However, even when their attempted engagement is forced, supervisors who act supportive and broadcast their desire to help employees have better success than those who manage from a distance. This situation by itself will help raise morale and reduce turnover. Other examples of ways to increase PSS include managing by walking around, polling employees about their needs, asking employees how they can better do their jobs, helping employees with projects, showing personal attention to each employee, and allowing for rule bending for exigent circumstances (such as personal emergencies).

A note of caution, when a supervisor becomes the focus of the employee and the relationship is high, morale may take a hit when a new supervisor arrives without the same interaction skills.¹⁶¹ Another setback may occur with employees (who have great relationships with their supervisors) give all the credit to their bosses for positive work outcomes and little credit to the organization. Good supervisors are filters on organizational methods and can help sell unsupported employee policies that improve morale and decrease turnover.

Wielded in the wrong way, a supervisor with bad intentions can manipulate employees' emotions and create environments in which morale

¹⁶¹ Carl P. Maertz, Michael J. Stevens, and Michael A. Campion, "A Turnover Model for the Mexican Maquiladoras," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 63, no. 1 (2003): 111–135.

suffers and employees want to leave.¹⁶² In this situation, they may alienate command staff by preaching to the workgroup about how they (commands) are unsupportive and they (the supervisors) are fighting on their behalf. They may also take credit for organizational-level decisions. To remain consistent, the supervisor should be considered as part of the organization and make decisions that mirror the philosophy of those at the administrative level. Homeland security agencies should develop leadership training programs that teach supervisors to be supportive, as well as also to share that the agency has their best interests at heart, in an effort to improve satisfaction and decrease turnover. To that extent, increasing POS or PSS is only one of many interventions that may improve morale, but it should not be overlooked.

C. STRESS MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

To some employees, a CISD debriefing or crisis management briefing is the agency's automatic answer to a traumatic event. Said another way, these people believe a debriefing should occur after all significant events. While the motivation may be correct, this practice can sometimes cause more harm than intended. When a debrief is scheduled, employees are given a forum to discuss the event and provided with resources to help them deal with it. What is not discussed as often is the potential damage done by CISDs and CMBs. Some studies have shown that they are not always helpful after significant psychological events.¹⁶³ In fact, some of those employees who attend are more traumatized when they are given significant details of a horrific scene or must watch co-workers break down emotionally because of how it affected them personally. This second-hand trauma created by these events leads to

¹⁶² Eisenberger et al., "Perceived Supervisor Support: Contributions to Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Retention," "565.

¹⁶³ Bryan E. Bledsoe, "Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM): Benefit or Risk for Emergency Services?," *Prehospital Emergency Care* 7, no. 2 (2003): 272–279.

psychological damage that may not have occurred otherwise.¹⁶⁴ Two types of problems created by these meetings are survivor guilt and rescuer trauma.

If leaders decide not to have a debrief—after consulting with peer support team members around the company—some line-level employees may be disheartened because the administration did not “care enough” to schedule healing events that would help the workers. These people are usually on the periphery and were not involved in discussions with peer support and only have minimal information about what was done. When a decision is made not to have a CISD, CMB or some other form of crisis intervention meeting, it is a good idea for the leadership to communicate the department’s response. An e-mail to the workgroup, or a meeting if a face-to-face response is possible, sharing an awareness of the event, and the reminder of the peer support program, goes a long way in restoring confidence in leadership and avoids the circulation of rumors that nothing has been done.

Critical incident stress management techniques are comprised of many more forms. Defusing, debriefings, one-on-one meetings, or some variation are used across the country to try to bring workgroups back to status quo after significant events. It is a good idea for leadership to understand that psychological first aid comes in many variations. It is worthwhile for them to decide proactively what some of those responses will be for their workgroups, before an event occurs. If nothing is done at all, other than the hope that co-workers will take care of each other, the old unstructured choir practice mentality is being relied upon to guide the healing. Organizations cannot afford to risk the loss of employees because they are unable to recover from this type of exposure, either through several stress reactions or diminished morale that can subsequently affect the entire workgroup.

¹⁶⁴ Jason James Bogden, “Hardiness As a Predictor of Success for Marine Corps First Responders in Training” (PhD diss., Walden University, 2014).

V. FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

A. FINDINGS

Through the analysis of the research on morale—especially the research associated with work within the homeland security enterprise—several consistent factors emerged. These findings are discoveries that allow some direction for homeland security leaders who want to make adjustments at their agencies in an effort to improve morale within them.

1. What is Morale?

A portion of this thesis examined current definitions of morale within the literature. While many of the definitions were similar, and had some link to employees' satisfaction in the workplace, enough differences show that one specifically agreed upon definition of morale does not exist. This lack of definition can create a conflict within the workplace when the employer and employee have inconsistent expectations on how their satisfaction can be improved.

2. Engagement

From the Hawthorne experiments to current examinations of the workplace, research has shown that changes in the environment did not influence the change in productivity and satisfaction, but the concern the researchers had for the workers and the acceptance of the feedback that they gave.¹⁶⁵

Employees were more engaged when

- they knew what was expected,
- had what they needed to do their jobs,
- had the opportunities to feel and see the impact of their work,
- felt they were part of something significant, and

¹⁶⁵ Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, 64.

- they were given chances to improve and develop within the workplace.

The research showed a strong positive relationship between POS and both organizational commitment and job satisfaction, weaker positive relationships between POS and performance, and a negative relationship between POS and intention to leave.

The research showed that all variables showed a stronger correlation in non-front line employees as compared to front line employees.¹⁶⁶ This correlation would indicate that job roles play a significant part in the amount of organizational support perceived by employees. If they are further away from the center of the organization, they may feel more disconnected. Agencies may receive some benefit from investigating ways to keep line-level employees from feeling this disconnect.

3. Turnover

In the homeland security sector, where employees commonly leave their jobs for similar but higher paying jobs in the private sector,¹⁶⁷ the level of commitment employees have for the agency could keep them from moving on. When they have higher levels of morale, they are significantly less likely to leave, per Riggle et al.'s analysis, which would indicate that government employers need to be aware of what satisfies their employees and keeps their morale levels high.

Statistics indicate that this nation's workforce is becoming increasingly more mobile, it is getting older, and a younger generation (who may have a preference for private sector jobs over public sector ones¹⁶⁸) is entering the job

¹⁶⁶ Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, 64.

¹⁶⁷ Priest and Arkin, "Top Secret America," 182.

¹⁶⁸ Lyons et al., "Comparing Apples to Apples: A Qualitative Investigation of Career Mobility Patterns across Four Generations," 333–357.

market.¹⁶⁹ Thus, government employers need to be aware of what satisfies these employees and keeps their morale levels high. By being in touch with what employees need to stay with an organization, government employers can minimize the amount of time and energy they put into hiring and recruitment campaigns.

4. Public Service Motivation

The motivation of those who work within the homeland security enterprise is different from the motivation of the public sector employee. Thus, the homeland security leadership needs to have a better understanding of these motivations and react to them differently than leaders within the private sector. For example, some people are attracted to public service because they feel dedicated to working for the country, through patriotism, altruism, or some other form of social consciousness. They have an underlying desire to improve the world around them, which is known as PSM.¹⁷⁰ Most research shows that employees within the public sector have higher levels of PSM than their counterparts in the private sector.¹⁷¹ The manager must have a good understanding of the motivations of all employees and respond to their needs based on those motivations.

5. Responder Stress and Burnout

Responder stress has been defined as an imbalance between what is required of responders and what they are truly capable of in situations in which failure can have significant consequences.¹⁷² Responders who have better control of their environment are better able to deal with the stress and challenges

¹⁶⁹ DelCampo et al., *Managing the Multi-generational Workforce: From the GI Generation to the Millennials*.

¹⁷⁰ Taylor and Westover, "Job Satisfaction in the Public Service: The Effects of Public Service Motivation, Workplace Attributes and Work Relations," 732.

¹⁷¹ Perry and Hondeghem, ed., *Motivation in Public Management: The Call of Public Service: The Call of Public Service*.

¹⁷² Patterson, "Job Experience and Perceived Job Stress among Police, Correctional, and Probation/Parole Officers," 260–285.

of public sector work, and are less likely to allow their morale levels to drop.¹⁷³ For this reason, autonomy in decision making (when possible) gives these employees the feeling of control in their behavior. Unfortunately, critical incidents in the homeland security field do not always allow for autonomy.

First line supervisors play a crucial role in monitoring the levels of distress and frustration within their specific workgroups. They are one of the first to become aware of emerging morale issues and stress indicators beyond the norm. They can proactively address these issues with very basic interventions, such as one-on-one conversations, discussions at briefings, and peer support implementation. Failure to address emerging issues may contribute to the employee becoming disengaged and burned out.

Burnout leads to poor attitudes in the workplace and less satisfied employees.¹⁷⁴ It also leads to higher turnover or the intention to leave a business.¹⁷⁵ Lastly, burnout is shown to have an effect on the physiological symptoms of employees. The far-reaching effects of burnout, to include the overall effect it may have on the morale of the organization, reinforces the need for supervisors to understand it and its potential to disrupt an organization if not dealt with proactively.

Opportunities to address burnout are divided into two categories, attempts to change the individual and attempts to change the organization. For the most part, programs to address individual burnout are more common because burnout is commonly considered a personal issue. Burnout is either considered to affect only one individual at a time, or it is much easier to fix one person at a time. Teaching coping skills is the most common manner that employers address

¹⁷³ McCafferty, McCafferty, and McCafferty, "Stress and Suicide in Police Officers: Paradigm of Occupational Stress," 233–243.

¹⁷⁴ Moore, "Why Is This Happening? A Causal Attribution Approach to Work Exhaustion Consequences," 335–349.

¹⁷⁵ Drake and Yadama, "A Structural Equation Model of Burnout and Job Exit among Child Protective Services Workers," 179–187.

burned-out employees.¹⁷⁶ Unfortunately, coping skills have not been universally successful in helping with burnout and it may be in an agency's best interest to attempt to address the problems proactively that lead to burnout in the first place.¹⁷⁷ Another option would be to attempt to make changes to the work environment, as it would certainly address the problem of burnout before it occurs. Sometimes, burnout is a result of the goals and expectations of the employee and the expectations of the employer not being equal. Some studies have shown that programs that identify these inconsistencies and work towards adjusting them to common ground reduce burnout.¹⁷⁸ Unfortunately, within the field of homeland security, many of the organizational stressors that employees deal with cannot be eliminated. Therefore, employers need to address the ones that they can, and provide support for employees that will allow them to deal with the effects.

6. Recovery

Also of importance to note is that studies have shown that recovery during break periods is positively related to subsequent satisfaction, morale, and performance.¹⁷⁹ Thus, it would be a good idea for public sector leaders to integrate recovery processes and resource replenishment into the practices of workers. Performance and job related goals are easier to reach when a person is well rested and feels recovered.

7. Favoritism

Social comparison is the act of workers comparing themselves with their peers. Employees will watch how others are treated and make note if favoritism

¹⁷⁶ Maslach and Goldberg, "Prevention of Burnout: New Perspectives," 63–74.

¹⁷⁷ Freedy and Hobfoll, "Stress Inoculation for Reduction of Burnout: A Conservation of Resources Approach," 311–325.

¹⁷⁸ Dierendonck, Schaufeli, and Buunk, "The Evaluation of an Individual Burnout Intervention Program: The Role of Inequity and Social Support," 392.

¹⁷⁹ Trougakos et al., "Making the Break Count: An Episodic Examination of Recovery Activities, Emotional Experiences, and Positive Affective Displays," 131–146.

is prevalent in the workplace. If supervisors are perceived to pay more attention to one employee over another, chances of burnout are higher and morale suffers.¹⁸⁰ Thus, it can be concluded that supervisors need to pay particular attention to the manner and time they spend on individual relationships in the workplace. While, in some cases, having a relationship with a supervisor is a resource, it can also be a stressor if those relationships give off the perception that supervisors have “favorites.”

Employees can separate POS from PSS, which is the degree to which supervisors value their contributions to the agency, or how much they generally care about their well-being.¹⁸¹ PSS has shown to relate significantly to important outcome metrics.¹⁸² For example, during studies of Army officers, it was shown that one-on-one support and mentoring from direct supervisors improved satisfaction and significantly reduced turnover intentions.¹⁸³

Research has shown that management practices can be changed to increase satisfaction, and in turn, increase business-unit outcomes (such as customer satisfaction, productivity, profit) while decreasing employee turnover and accidents.¹⁸⁴ Engagement with the employees has been linked with customer loyalty metrics, productivity, employee turnover, safety, absenteeism, patient safety, and quality of product.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁰ van der Zee, Bakker, and Buunk, “Burnout and Reactions to Social Comparison Information among Volunteer Caregivers,” 391–410.

¹⁸¹ Kottke and Sharafinski, “Measuring Perceived Supervisory and Organizational Support,” 1075–1079.

¹⁸² Maertz et al., “The Effects of Perceived Organizational Support and Perceived Supervisor Support on Employee Turnover,” 1059–1075.

¹⁸³ Payne and Huffman, “A Longitudinal Examination of the Influence of Mentoring on Organizational Commitment and Turnover,” 158–168.

¹⁸⁴ Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes, “Business-unit-level Relationship between Employee Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, and Business Outcomes: A Meta-analysis,” 269.

¹⁸⁵ James K. Harter, Frank L. Schmidt, Emily A. Killham, and Sangeeta Agrawal, *Q12® Meta-Analysis: The Relationship between Engagement at Work and Organizational Outcomes* (Washington, DC: The Gallup Organization, 2009).

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings uncovered in this research highlight some distinctive ways to address morale concerns at agencies within the homeland security enterprise. Since that enterprise includes agencies at the federal, state and local levels, many of the findings lead to broad recommendations that can be applied at each level. As a result of size constraints, universal efforts to improve morale have not been undertaken across all agencies. However, some programs have been undertaken to address morale problems on a narrower basis. For example, efforts to improve morale have been undertaken at the federal level. This task is made more difficult when considering that improvement techniques that show promise in one department may not work well in a different part of the organization.

One of the largest morale improvement efforts was conducted by the DHS when it created the DHS-Together Employee and Organizational Resilience initiative in 2009 after receiving low FEVS scores. The FEVS is conducted annually across all federal agencies, and the DHS has been at or near the bottom since its creation.¹⁸⁶

The DHS scores, which include poor comparative rankings in leadership, results-oriented performance, talent management, and overall job satisfaction,¹⁸⁷ influenced an effort by DHS management to attempt and improve the culture of the organization. The DHS-Together initiative was part of this attempt.¹⁸⁸ In the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) 2013 report on the program, they applauded the DHS for recognizing the importance of resilience, but candidly stated that little

¹⁸⁶ Kellie Lunney, "Low Morale Continues to Plague Homeland Security," *Government Executive*, November 1, 2012, <http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/11/low-morale-continues-plague-homeland-security/59204/>.

¹⁸⁷ United States Office of Personnel Management Planning and Policy Analysis, *2014 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Results*, 5.

¹⁸⁸ National Research Council, *A Ready and Resilient Workforce for the Department of Homeland Security: Protecting America's Front Line* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2013).

progress would be made in the improvement of organizational culture without changes within the organization.

Many of the IOM's recommendations mirror findings within this thesis. The similarities indicate that morale problems that permeate the DHS are also found at the state, county, and municipal departments that support it. The following recommendations are a result of seeing similar veins running through the research and they have applicability across the discipline.

1. Define and Embrace Morale

Every agency hoping to improve internal morale needs to begin by defining what morale means to it. Worker satisfaction, esprit de corps, perceived organizational support, and other synonyms might be incorporated into the definition. All employees should understand what morale is at their agency so that everyone is striving for the same improvements. Both line-level and supervisors should take part in defining it, and senior leadership should support it. All parties need to be engaged in improvement efforts, and not rely on others to improve it for them. Leaders need to be defined by their awareness of morale, and promotion should be based on the emotional intelligence associated with it. Training and development programs that include the agencies' morale improvement efforts need to be incorporated into the agency and will improve the quality of command. Agencies need to put "the needed foundation in place to produce trust in leadership, improve morale, communicate effectively and ultimately create a culture of readiness and resilience."¹⁸⁹

Action: The homeland security agency must establish a definition of morale and incorporate it into the policies, procedures, and mission of the agency. That definition should be established with input from employees at all levels. Utilizing a working group or committee to frame the definition is one way to ensure it has the needs of all employees in mind. It is important to note that

¹⁸⁹ National Research Council, *A Ready and Resilient Workforce for the Department of Homeland Security: Protecting America's Front Line*.

morale also affects supervisors and administration. Therefore, a definition should include leadership.

An example of a definition of morale that could be utilized at a homeland security agency is the following.

Morale is the overall level of satisfaction our employees' feel about the work they perform. While it is sometimes measured as a whole, this agency understands that individuals' perceptions, beliefs and emotions at all levels in the organization have an effect on morale. We are committed to creating policy, making decisions, and conducting work with considerations on how it will affect our personnel's esprit de corp. Work within the homeland security enterprise can include response to horrific events, long hours with little breaks, high levels of public scrutiny, and political pressure (among other stresses). The agency will take steps to address the reactions our employees have to these stresses in an effort to maintain their morale. This includes providing psychological first aid, supporting physical fitness, helping maintain a healthy work life balance and creating an environment of open communication. All employees must understand this definition and do their part, despite their position within the agency, to help keep morale levels high. Management will take steps to periodically measure morale and employees should use that opportunity to provide feedback.

This definition provides a general framework that can be applied and adjusted, depending on the needs of the homeland security agency. It is important for workgroups labeled with morale problems to discuss those issues overtly and create a procedure that addresses them. It is equally important for workgroups that have not yet had dips in worker satisfaction to create policies proactively that can keep morale levels from falling.

2. Create Engaging Communication Strategies

To address morale issues, engagement needs to occur between line-level and command level. It can be achieved through the creation of robust internal and external communication models accessible by all employees. This model should include multiple methods and mediums. Both current technology—that includes e-mails, blogs, social media and other resources—along with older

methods—such as notes, billboards, newsletters and the like—can be received by all employees in a manner with which they are comfortable. The model should also be bidirectional and allow for messages to be sent both up and down the chain-of-command. One of the largest challenges to the DHS workforce is the lack of communication across the agency.¹⁹⁰ Many employees do not know about available existing resources, programs, and services for themselves and their families. Programs are already in place that are designed to enhance the readiness and resilience of the workforce. Without awareness of these resources, workers at a homeland security organization are isolated from programs that might assist them. Agencies would derive some benefit from investigating ways to keep line-level employees from feeling this disconnect.

A transparent model will minimize the diffusing of messages and provide employees interested in understanding the meaning behind decision making a resource for more complete comprehension. Due to the external pressures on public safety practices, it is important for the agency to have a method in place to communicate with the community they serve. Again, this message should be sent in multiple ways, not just through the media. Some administrators are concerned about the public disclosure of information shared during transparent communication. While the release of information, especially sensitive information, is always a concern for leadership within the homeland security enterprise, the communication referred to in this section is commonly not highly sensitive, or it includes details that would have been uncovered through other releases of information anyway.

Agencies need to build and promote a communication strategy that engages front line leaders as “advocates for workforce readiness and resilience to engage the workforce at every level in every component and headquarters office.”¹⁹¹ The strategy would encourage two-way communication and input from

¹⁹⁰ William L. Waugh and Gregory Streib, “Collaboration and Leadership for Effective Emergency Management,” *Public Administration Review* 66, no. s1 (2006): 136.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

line-level workers into decision making and the generation of ideas. This strategy mirrors the engagement encountered by workers at the Hawthorne plant a century ago. Through a shared understanding of the mission, vision, and values of the agency, a culture will be created in which both employees and administrators feel valued and respected. Without two-way dialogue, true communication is not occurring.

Katherine Miller and Peter Monge's meta-analysis of participation, satisfaction, and productivity studies found that participative leadership is effective in agencies in which employees are tasked with dealing with complex problems and issues, as are dealt with in homeland security agencies on all levels.¹⁹² This type of leadership stimulates the work population. That participative climate has a substantial effect on employees' satisfaction.¹⁹³

Action: Communication strategies should be clearly established during executive-level meetings. The messages should then be placed in numerous formats. All agencies should use social media as a manner to convey messages. Most of the workforce has access to social media and uses it to send and receive messages. Hard copy newsletters should also be produced and distributed (with the same messages). First-level supervisors should be instructed to have face-to-face discussions with their direct reports, and also provide them with the same message. In this environment, those supervisors should solicit feedback on the message and immediately relay that response back up the chain-of-command. In larger agencies, or those that have multiple workplaces, leadership is encouraged to utilize technology to connect with workgroups, through video conferencing software. While a face-to-face visit with the department head is always better received, the second option of visiting the workgroup through an Internet software tool is acceptable. It allows leadership to cover great distances,

¹⁹² Katherine I. Miller and Peter R. Monge, "Participation, Satisfaction, and Productivity: A Meta-analytic Review," *Academy of Management Journal* 29, no. 4 (1986): 732.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 748.

be in multiple places at once, and garner some instant feedback from those employees with the professional courage to share their opinions.

3. Monitor Workforce Resiliency

Senior leadership needs to build and support a culture that makes workforce readiness and resiliency a high priority. A resilient workforce is “healthy (physically, mentally, and emotionally), has high morale, is adaptable, finds purpose and meaning in its work, and is productive and engaged.”¹⁹⁴ In the face of shrinking budgets, it can be difficult. However, a concentrated effort needs to be made to measure and react to the readiness of the organization when factors begin to affect its resiliency. The use of a measurement tool to monitor the organization’s health is necessary, and is already utilized at some levels. The use of the FEVS is one tool, but the IOM report suggests utilizing other internal review processes as well. One crucial reason to have a measurement tool in place is for the tracking of trends within the organization from year to year. When employees claim a rise or fall in satisfaction levels, a survey or other measurement device provides the metrics that support or dispute their claims. These tools also support an enhanced communication model and can proactively identify department needs. They can also give better insight into whether the efforts of the agency are having the intended impact. Depending on local labor laws, these measurement tools may require the endorsement of labor groups within the organization.

Acton: Homeland security agencies should create a measurement tool administered during annual evaluation time. It should be modeled after the FEVS, and given consistently so that administrators can tell if organizational health is shifting from year-to-year. Agencies should also keep detailed data of metrics that may indirectly affect workplace satisfaction and resiliency. This data, which might include experience levels, sick leave use, vacancies, and age, can

¹⁹⁴ National Research Council, *A Ready and Resilient Workforce for the Department of Homeland Security: Protecting America’s Front Line*, 3.

provide insight into changes in outcomes when little else has changed about the organization. Low cost software tools, such as Survey Monkey, are available to assist with this type of data collection when agencies are looking for inexpensive ways to conduct surveys. When possible, they should be anonymous. As previously mentioned, labor unions may raise concerns if the questioning focuses on issues that fall under the right to bargain. Human Resources should review any questions to ensure that questions are not asked that violate workers' rights.

Administrators who utilize surveys should be careful in reacting to them without a thorough review. Surveys suggested in this section provide a forum for all employees. At times, a vocal disenfranchised minority may skew the results of the survey and make it appear that the agency is having major satisfaction and morale problems. All employees should be encouraged to complete the survey in an effort to maintain a true picture of organizational health. However, once that picture is realized, administrators should be willing to make reasonable adjustments to the organization to support positive change. In turn, those changes should be shared with personnel to demonstrate that the system is working and the agency is changing based on their input.

4. Monitor Employee Egress

Employees will consistently move into and out of public sector agencies through the course of normal attrition. As the workplaces ages, more retirements may occur, but other factors may also influence the ingress and egress of employees. The current reputation of the DHS and its support agencies can affect whether someone applies or resigns. Pay scales, furlough days, opportunities in the private sector, and other factors might also influence a move. Combined with these reasons, employees may feel lower levels of satisfaction and contribute their dissatisfaction entirely to the workplace. It would be worthwhile to intercept this category of employees before they leave the agency and their institutional knowledge is lost.

By being in touch with what employees need to stay with an organization, government employers can minimize the amount of time and energy they put into hiring and recruitment campaigns. Employers should strive to manage and better understand why employees leave organizations. If they are leaving for morale issues, then research should be conducted to uncover the cause of those issues before employees reach the point at which they cannot be recovered by the agency and decide to move on.

Action: Government employers can become better aware of what satisfies their employees and keeps their morale levels high by systematically conducting exit interviews. At many agencies, Human Resources representatives interview employees as they go through the exit process. However, it is not as frequent to have members of the person's direct chain-of-command ask questions about what led up to the resignation. In addition to normal HR exit interviews, homeland security agencies should conduct two additional interviews with employees who are resigning or retiring. One of those interviews should be conducted by the person's direct supervisor. Since relationships between staff and their supervisor can sometimes be contentious, a second interview should be done between the departing employee and an agency mentor. This person does not need to be in the employee's direct chain-of-command, but should have some level of supervision within the agency. The results of those discussions should then be sent to administrators for review. These two interviews allow much greater insight into why the employee is leaving. It also helps gather information about all parts of the workplace, even those that may have not had a bearing on the employee's departure.

The questions asked in these interviews should include inquiries into what has had both positive and negative effects on the employee's morale. This interview may be the best opportunity to hear a first-hand opinion about how management actions are perceived, without the employee having to fear negative consequences. The answers to those questions can be used to improve future decision making and communication methods to avoid pushing other

employees towards resignation. Consistent responses regarding needed improvements should be used to make adjustments. As noted previously, those adjustments (and the reasons for them) should be shared with all personnel.

Administrators should be prepared to hear all complaints regarding the manner in which they lead the organization. If they employ this exit interview strategy, they should try to listen to the underlying concerns and not take the comments as a personal attack on their leadership. Ironically, without being mentally prepared to accept this feedback, the morale level of leadership might dip.

5. Understand Employee Motivation

Public sector employees are motivated differently than their peers in the private sector. Thus, homeland security leadership needs to have a better understanding of these motivations and react to them differently than leaders within the private sector. PSM is engrained in many of these employees, who have a desire to improve the world and make it a safer place for others. Leadership should be in tune with the employees exhibiting this quality and support it through the recognition of their efforts and impact on the community they serve. Employees with high levels of PSM can become discouraged if they feel they are not doing a job that is having impact and may have lower levels of morale if they are underappreciated for their work. They may also become adversely affected by negative media reports.

Supervisors will need to monitor employees consistently for changes in their motivation and morale levels. Official tools, such as evaluation programs, give supervisors opportunities to review the employees' goals and desires. By understanding and supporting their interests better, morale levels are positively affected.

Action: Employers within homeland security agencies should remember how their employees are motivated. Much like those who sign up for the military during times of war, PSM is inherent in most people working in the public sector.

As discussed in the communication section, leaders should create a newsletter that is distributed on a reoccurring basis. Some part of the newsletter should be dedicated to highlighting an effort made by an employee who had a positive impact on the community or workgroup within the agency. This recognition reignites the employee's PSM and encourages others to mirror the efforts.

In addition, supervisors need to monitor the workplace goals that have been established with their direct reports. Goals should be included in the employees' annual evaluation and (when the goals are reasonable) all efforts should be made to help them reach those goals. Supervisors should be evaluated on their ability to help their employees reach goals to create an environment in which employees feel their development is appreciated by the agency.

6. Address Workplace Stress

Stress is inherent in the public sector, especially in jobs within the DHS and the agencies that support it. That stress can be extrinsic or intrinsic, and both can alter the morale of the worker. Leadership needs to have a planned response to critical incident stress that affects those they supervise, and that response should vary depending on the situation and the person feeling the psychological trauma. Every employee (or workgroup) will react differently to what they see and feel differently about how they are treated afterwards. Many options are available on addressing exposure to significant events; the only wrong response is no response at all. Leaders also need to react to internal stress created by politics, bureaucracy, and other means. When possible, adjustments should be made to minimize the stress caused by processes, and those changes should be communicated through the workgroup. Leaders and supervisors should publically provide recognition to employees who take steps to improve the morale and satisfaction levels of their co-workers. This recognition can be done a variety of ways but should be shared broadly.

One of the key ways an agency within the public sector can help address stress is through the creation of a peer support team. Unchecked stress within the homeland security enterprise may lead to the burnout of employees. It is a form of psychological distress far reaching within the organization. Leadership needs to understand that it has the potential to affect the morale of the agency significantly if it is not dealt with proactively. Employees who help peers with their morale concerns create a culture in which stressors are legitimized and addressed out in the open before they become toxic. Organizations in which seeking help is encouraged without the risk of embarrassment or labeling give employees positive social outlets and help improve morale. Unmanaged stress can gain momentum and employees may become disenfranchised. That attitude turns into contagious behavior amongst the workgroup and negatively affects morale.

Peer support teams are cost effective and do not require extensive labor hours. The team members work confidentially to address stressors before they become crippling. They are the agencies' first opportunity to address stress disorders, addictions, behavioral problems, and morale issues. The problems that are avoided might turn into a serious crisis at work if allowed to grow without intervention.¹⁹⁵

Action: Homeland security agencies should create peer support teams if they do not already have them in place. The selection of team members is very important. In some agencies, a call for applicants is distributed and the candidates are selected from the pool. This pool can include people who do not have the correct motivation to assist their peers. Unfortunately, some employees may be more interested in knowing the struggles their peers are having than in helping them through those struggles. As confidentiality is important, peer support team members should be hand selected. The team members should be distributed across the work groups and should be led by a manager with a good

¹⁹⁵ North et al., "Workplace Response of Companies Exposed to the 9/11 World Trade Center Attack: A Focus-Group Study," 101–118.

reputation and a history of doing similar peer support work. This team should function more behind the scenes and be prepared to take any necessary intervention steps under the philosophy that its co-worker's mental health is of the utmost importance. While the team itself performs confidentially, the existence of the team should be shared and the use of the team promoted by leadership.

7. Create Morale Wellness Programs

Much like the military has done for years, agencies within the public sector should create morale, wellness, and recreation programs for their employees and their families. The auditing of budget dollars and governmental concerns about gifting public funds can limit the extent of these programs, but their value as a form of organizational maintenance is immeasurable. Public sector leaders must find more unique ways to support their troops. Establishing workout programs, having work celebrations for accomplishments, hosting family days in the workplace, giving high performing employees rewarding assignments, and establishing flextime practices are examples of some programs used to improve the morale of employees.

In addition to those mentioned, leaders should consider the establishment of a mentorship program as a method of developing employees and improving morale. Another common military tool, it has been shown that one-on-one support and mentoring from direct supervisors have improved satisfaction and significantly reduced the desire for someone to quit.¹⁹⁶

Action: Employers should create a procedure that supports the building of morale and wellness of the employees. Physical fitness programs are one of the quickest ways to improve physical, mental, and organizational health and should be included in this procedure. The list of additional programs that can be included is exhaustive and the employees can be utilized to provide suggestions.

¹⁹⁶ Payne and Huffman, "A Longitudinal Examination of the Influence of Mentoring on Organizational Commitment and Turnover," 158–168.

Whatever is decided, some type of event should be conducted quarterly. That event, whether a barbeque or family member open house, should include representatives from the administration. While not all employees will engage in these events, it is another opportunity for the leadership at the organization to show its support for the employee. These events do not need to be costly and can be conducted at agencies with restrictive budgets.

8. Promote and Train Supervisors with Morale Skills

Supervisors within the homeland security discipline need to have a variety of skills. Promotional examinations and hiring assessments include many of these abilities but do not always emphasize the satisfaction or morale of the workgroup. This lack of emphasis may be due to the limitations of these exercises when it comes to measuring candidates' qualifications in team building, stress management, and employee support. If a portion of the promotional testing included metrics on the candidates' people skills and emotional intelligence, it is more likely that supervisors would be promoted who already have the tools to assist with workplace morale.

Agencies also need to make morale awareness a part of their training curriculum. For example, one concern raised by employees that negatively affects the workplace is favoritism, or the appearance of favoritism by supervisors. Training programs could be instituted that help supervisors become more aware of the manner and time they spend on individual relationships in the workplace, in an effort to reduce claims of special treatment.

In addition to training and mentoring good traits in leadership, agencies also need to hold supervisors accountable for behavior that negatively affects workplace morale. For example, supervisors who alienate the administration by advising their subordinates that the organization is not supportive and does not make the best decisions on their behalf create environments in which organizational distress can erode morale. These supervisors need to be made aware of how their behavior directly causes this dissatisfaction. They should be

provided training on how to represent departmental decision making better while still remaining connected to their workgroups, and held accountable if they do not apply it within their team. Increasing POS, while also increasing PSS, is one intervention technique that may improve morale and should not be overlooked.

Action: Current leadership promotion exercises include tests, questions, and assessments of various skills and are designed to forecast how the employee will perform as a supervisor. Administrators pick a list of skills—from writing abilities to leadership under pressure—that are used to rate the candidates. Homeland security leaders need to include emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and the awareness of morale as a percentage of that evaluation. If 10% of the assessment focused on these qualities, leaders would be promoted who are better prepared to address the satisfaction of those in the workplace. Once promoted, supervisors should be evaluated annually on their ability to address the satisfaction of their employees. This adjustment will allow for a culture of disenfranchisement to creep towards one in which employees are more engaged with their employer.

While the ability to recognize and react to dips in employee satisfaction is important, this section does not suggest that it is the only factor that should guide decision making. A leader who recognizes morale as a factor in the workplace is not one who allows feelings to get in the way of performance. Rather, a leader within the homeland security enterprise should understand that morale is one factor to be considered and not ignore it altogether.

C. CONCLUSION

The last few years have provided examples of the morale challenges associated with the DHS and the agencies that support it. Government shutdowns and looming debt ceilings caused morale to weaken. According to the Washington Post, 82% of those surveyed believed the 2013 shutdown significantly damaged morale.¹⁹⁷ The Washington DC Naval shipyard shooting

¹⁹⁷ Davidson, "The Shutdown Is Over but Federal Employee Morale Still Suffers."

on September 16, 2013 tested the resolve of emergency responders in the Capital region and again reminded public safety workers that threats against the United States are possible on this nation's soil. The media ran reports detailing poor coordination in the emergency response. *USA Today* published an article on how tactical units were called off by DC Police even though they could have assisted during the active shooting by the suspect.¹⁹⁸ The frustration of tactical unit members and the lack of organizational support in such instances cause morale problems within agencies, divides work groups, and causes friction between them. This situation substantially reduces the functionality of the groups as an interconnected response force.

Managers in homeland security agencies must recognize the importance of morale. Both proactive and reactive measures to improve morale should be undertaken to influence organizational culture positively, as well as increase productivity, and employee engagement and reduce turnover. This thesis is an effort to examine morale and explain its place within public sector agencies that have homeland security responsibilities.

¹⁹⁸ Uliano, "U.S. Capital Police Launch a Review of its Navy Yard Shooting Response."

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APPENDIX

A. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AGENCIES¹⁹⁹

Lead up to 9/11	Today
The U.S. Customs Service (Treasury)	U.S. Customs and Border Protection —inspection, border and ports of entry responsibilities U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement —customs law enforcement responsibilities
The Immigration and Naturalization Service (Justice)	U.S. Customs and Border Protection —inspection functions and the U.S. Border Patrol U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement —immigration law enforcement: detention and removal, intelligence, and investigations U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services —adjudications and benefits programs
The Federal Protective Service	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement until 2009); currently resides within the National Protection and Programs Directorate
The Transportation Security Administration (Transportation)	Transportation Security Administration
Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (Treasury)	Federal Law Enforcement Training Center
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (part)(Agriculture)	U.S. Customs and Border Protection —agricultural imports and entry inspections
Office for Domestic Preparedness (Justice)	Responsibilities distributed within FEMA
The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	Federal Emergency Management Agency
Strategic National Stockpile and the National Disaster Medical System (HHS)	Returned to Health and Human Services, July, 2004
Nuclear Incident Response Team (Energy)	Responsibilities distributed within FEMA
Domestic Emergency Support Teams (Justice)	Responsibilities distributed within FEMA
National Domestic Preparedness Office (FBI)	Responsibilities distributed within FEMA

¹⁹⁹ “Who Joined DHS,” accessed February 2, 2015, <http://www.dhs.gov/who-joined-dhs>.

Lead up to 9/11	Today
CBRN Countermeasures Programs (Energy)	Science & Technology Directorate
Environmental Measurements Laboratory (Energy)	Science & Technology Directorate
National BW Defense Analysis Center (Defense)	Science & Technology Directorate
Plum Island Animal Disease Center (Agriculture)	Science & Technology Directorate
Federal Computer Incident Response Center (GSA)	US-CERT , Office of Cybersecurity and Communications in the National Protection and Programs Directorate
National Communications System (Defense)	Office of Cybersecurity and Communications in the National Protection and Programs Directorate
National Infrastructure Protection Center (FBI)	Dispersed throughout the Department, including Office of Operations Coordination and Office of Infrastructure Protection
Energy Security and Assurance Program (Energy)	Integrated into the Office of Infrastructure Protection
U.S. Coast Guard	U.S. Coast Guard
U.S. Secret Service	U.S. Secret Service

B. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY DIRECTORATES

The following three directorates, created by the Homeland Security Act of 2002, were abolished by a July 2005 reorganization,²⁰⁰ and their responsibilities transferred to other departmental components.

- Border and Transportation Security
- Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection

²⁰⁰ "Department Six-point Agenda," last published June 24, 2015, <http://www.dhs.gov/departmentsixpointagenda>.

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